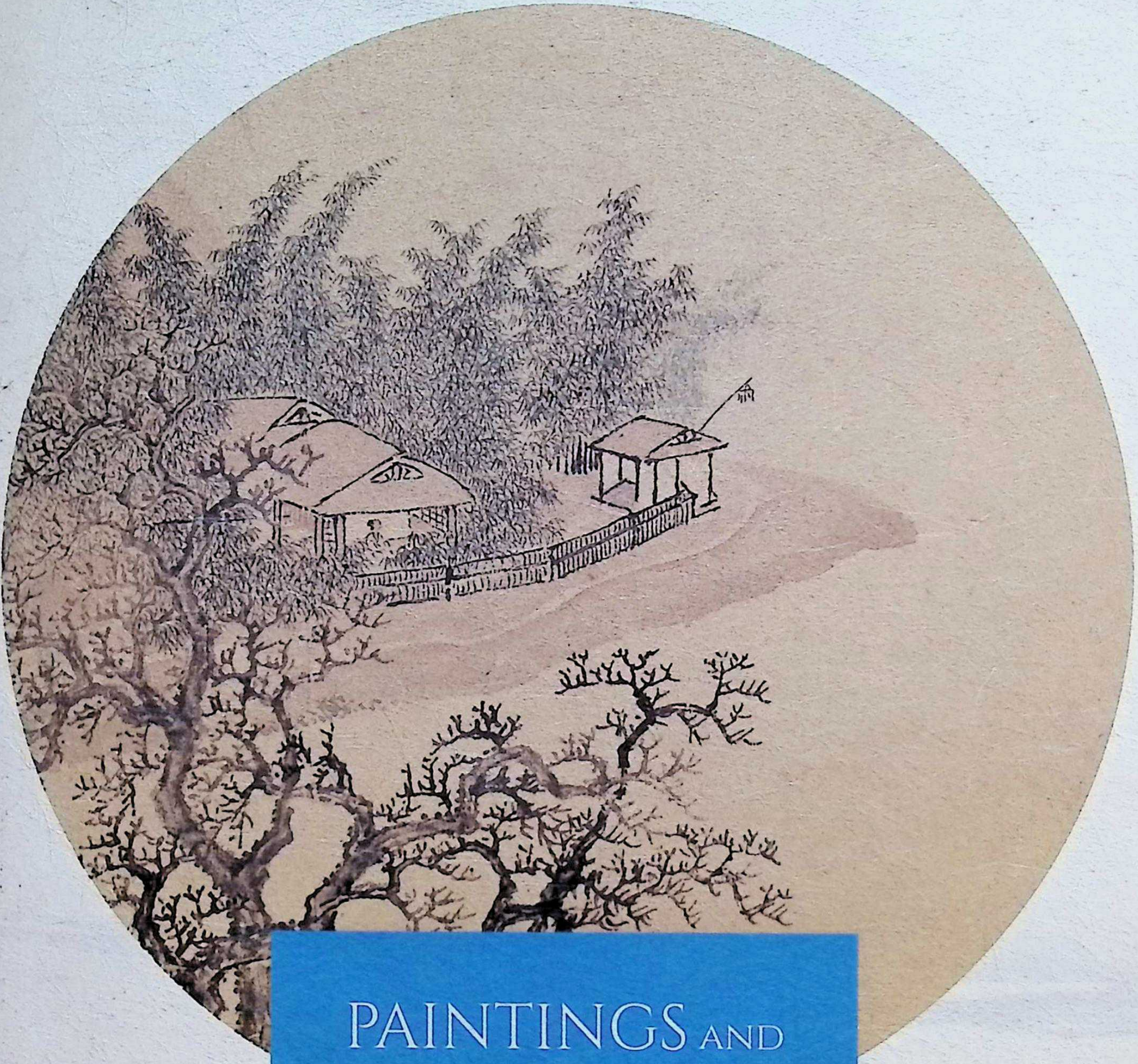
ESSENTIAL CULTURAL RELICS OF CHINA IN MUSEUMS OVERSEAS



PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY

COMPILED BY KOU QIN

CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

ESSENTIAL CULTURAL RELICS OF CHINA
IN MUSEUMS OVERSEAS

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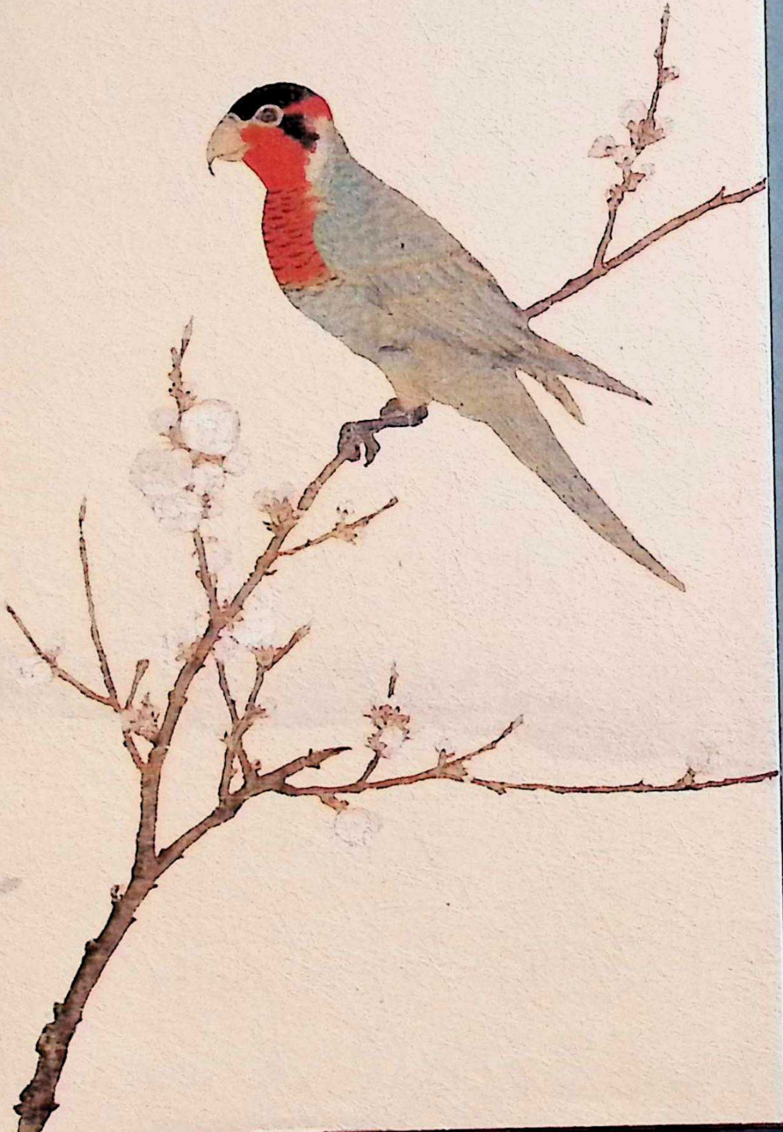

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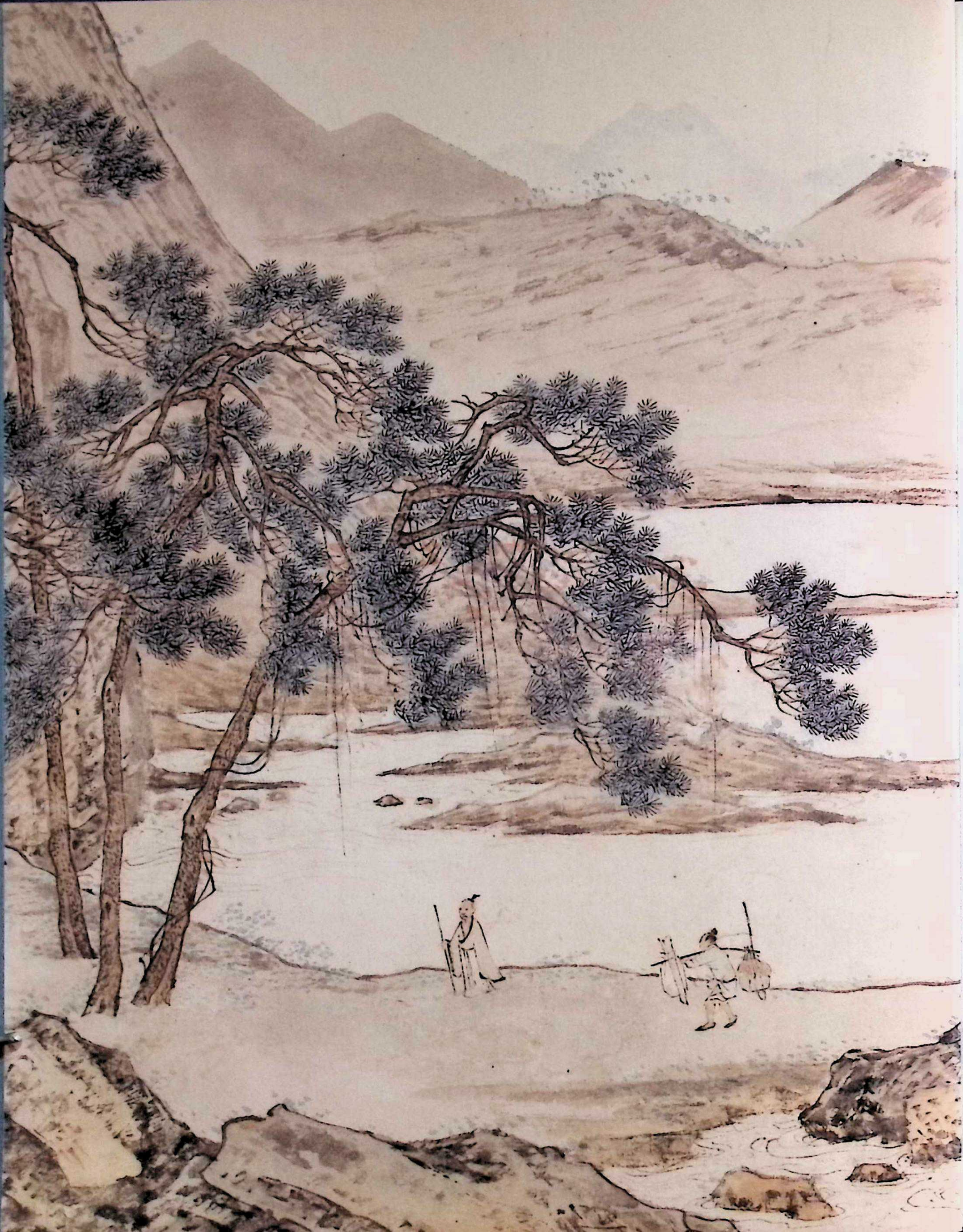
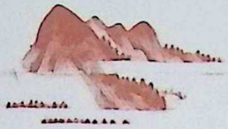




ESSENTIAL CULTURAL RELICS OF CHINA
IN MUSEUMS OVERSEAS

PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY

COMPILED BY KOU QIN

CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

Foreword

Numerous Chinese cultural relics, from the massive Yungang Grottoes to tiny snuff bottles, have survived many calamities natural or man-made through the ages, becoming valuable traces of history. It is only in the late Qing Dynasty (1616-1911) that the outflow of many of these cultural relics began following the Opium War started by Britain in 1840 and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, under which the Qing government ceded the territory of Hong Kong and opened five treaty ports for trade, and China was reduced to a semi-colony. These treasures were taken away by force (foreign troops invading Beijing), by trickery (or cheating, e.g. the acquisition of scriptures, calligraphic works and paintings in Dunhuang), or at a price (extensive resale of invaluable calligraphic works, paintings, ceramics, bronze ware, carvings and other curios by domestic and foreign antiques dealers).

With an education background in old-style private schools, I got familiar with the Four Books (namely *the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, the Analects of Confucius* and *Mencius*), other Confucian classics and historical records, and read extensively the replicas of paintings and calligraphy passed down generations. When Japan invaded China in 1937, the city in which my college was located was occupied, so I went to the United States in 1938 where I studied electrical engineering. My real interest, however, was in Chinese literature, history, and fine arts. Later in 1941, I turned to study educational cinematography and photography, with works all about Chinese art. For example, in 1942, I went to the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. to shoot a ten-minute short film titled *Ancient Chinese Paintings in the U.S.*

The luckiest thing in my life is I met Ms. Cheng Huabao when I filmed *the East in the West* (Chinese students studying in the United States) in 1943. She was also a Chinese studying British Literature in the U.S. We worked together, married each other, and continued to work together. She was fluent in several Chinese dialects (Mandarin, Shanghai dialect, Suzhou dialect and Cantonese) and foreign languages (English, German and French), which worked well for our trips to galleries in the U.S. and across Europe. Also, I am very familiar with Aschwin Lippe (German), deputy curator of the Department of Far Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Aschwin had close connections with many galleries, so he was an influential middleman for us.

My first opportunity to film in museums came when Mr. Li Shuming funded the production of the *Brief History of Chinese Fine Arts*, a film series which gives a glimpse of Chinese paintings and calligraphy, carvings, bronze ware, and ceramics. We secured the collaboration of 12 museums and individuals in the U.S. The second opportunity came in 1971 when, with the funding from my old friend Shen Jiazhen, I was able to produce the *Chinese History*. This film series, combining cultural relics and live footage, briefly documents Chinese history from early eras through the Shang Dynasty, then the Zhou, Qin, Han, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, to the introduction of Western culture to China and the conflicts between the two cultures. For this project, my wife and I, bringing along photographic equipment, made four long-haul trips, leaving our footprints in the U.S., Europe, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions of China, among other places. We were especially lucky as the rules of many cultural institutions back then were much looser than today. We and the temporary assistants we hired locally were very at ease and trusted. Except for the moving and placement of artifacts, which must be handled by museum staff, we had considerable freedom in, for example, adding background paper and lighting to the desired extent.

In conclusion, when I wrote and made 16mm films, I always brought along 4×5 mm and 35 mm cameras for photographing Chinese cultural relics wherever I went. As a result, there are tens of thousands of such photos. Now, I've got the chance to pick out some and give them to Mr. Kou Qin at the Guardian Art Center for collation and publication, for the benefit of readers. This foreword is intended as a synopsis and to commemorate my wife and close companion Cheng Huabao (died in 2003).

The institutions where these treasures are housed are geographically diverse. Thus readers now have a chance to get a glimpse of them and realize how great Chinese culture is. It is my hope that these small pictures can shine into all corners of the Earth like bright stars.

Wan-go H.C. Weng, aged over 98, finishes at Laixi Residence.

Wan-go H.C. Weng

July 2016

Editorial Notes

1. The photos used in this book series, titled "Essential Cultural Relics of China in Museums Overseas", were taken by Mr. Wan-go H.C. Weng at museums overseas in the 20th century.
2. This series includes 373 pieces (or sets) of Chinese cultural relics collected in museums overseas, covering 8 categories, i.e., paintings and calligraphy, extant Dunhuang paintings, murals, bronze ware, ceramics, jade ware, gold and silver ware, and Buddhist statues, which are grouped into 5 books by material and genre.
3. The cultural relics included in this series are arranged in chronological order or in the order of dynasties. Particularly, bronze ware are divided into cooking utensils and kitchenware, drinking vessels, and miscellaneous ware, with the same type of artifacts arranged in chronological order; while for extant Dunhuang paintings and murals, certain items of the same genre are arranged in chronological order.
4. The profile of each artifact lists its name, dynasty, author/artist, material, size, and current location, vivid with both picture and text.
5. As the item profile notes its current location, the locations of certain items are not where they were collected when Mr. Weng photographed them.
6. The institutions of cultural relics throughout the book adopt uniform names. The former Fogg Art Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum and Busch-Reisinger Museum, all parts of the Harvard University, have been merged as one, so the current name "Harvard Art Museums" is used throughout the book.
7. Limited by shooting environment and conditions and without any comparison with originals, some photos used in this series may look different from their originals.

CONTENTS

Foreword 002
Editorial Notes 004
Introduction to Paintings and Calligraphy 010
- Nymph of the Luo River 017
- Northern Qi Scholars Collating Classic Texts 018
- The Thirteen Emperors 021
- Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk 022
- Palace Ladies Tuning the Lute 024
- Fu Sheng Expounding the Classic 027
- Palace Banquet 029
- A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks 031
- Fishermen's Evening Song 034
- Fish Swimming amid Falling Flowers 036
- Mountains and Water 040
- Cloudy Mountains 045
- Five-colored Parakeet on a Blossoming Apricot Tree 046
- Imperial Decrees to Liang Rujia 048
- Incomplete Manuscript of Commentaries on the Analects of Confucius 050
- Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute 055
- Bare Willows and Distant Mountains 058
- Twelve Views of Landscape 061
- Li Bai Chanting a Poem 064
- Nine Dragons 067
- Five Dragons 068

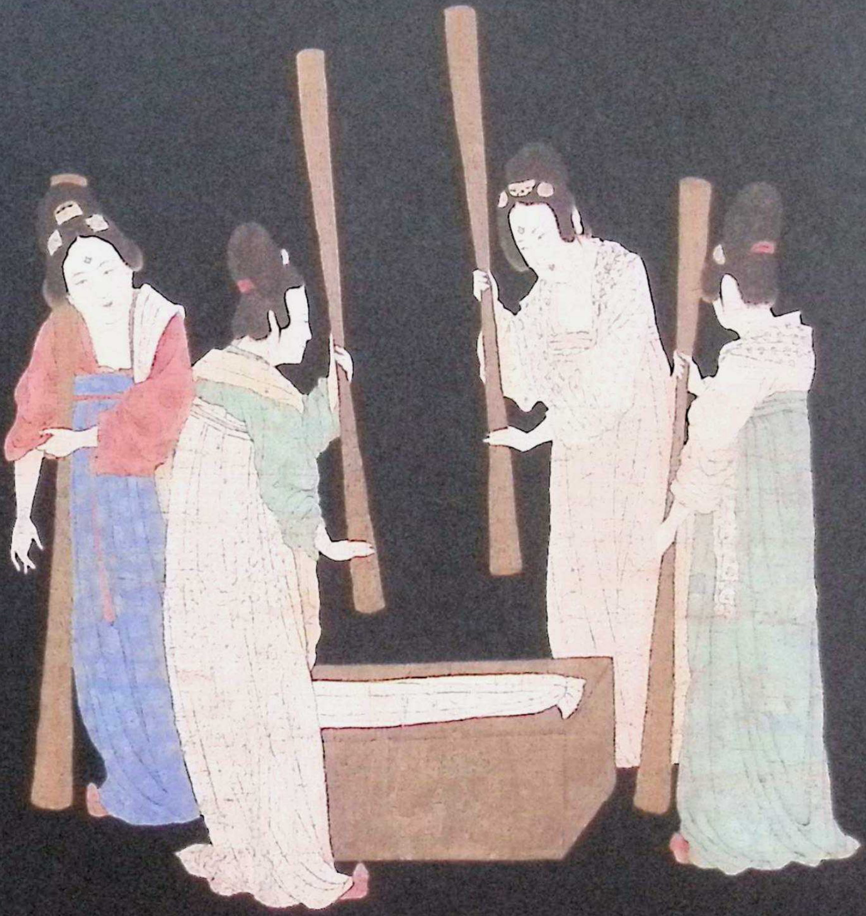
The Buddha Addressing Yamaraja at Kusinagara 070
Dream Journey along the Xiao and Xiang Rivers 072
Emperor Xuanzong's Flight to Shu 074
The Second Zen Patriarch in Contemplation 077
The Sixteen Luohan 078
The Hundred Geese 083
Clear Weather in the Valley 084
Early Autumn 086
Ink Bamboo 088
Twin Pines, Level Distance 090
Fishermen, after Jing Hao 092
Quiet Life in a Wooded Glen 094
A Breath of Spring 096
Spray of Bamboo 098
The Serene Bank of the Xiang River 100
Bamboo-Covered Stream in Spring Rain 103
Fishermen on an Autumn River 104
Two Saluki Hounds 106
Ode to Pomegranate and Melon Vine 108
Poet on a Mountain Top 110
Storm over the River 111
Beggars and Street Characters 113
Autumn Mountains 114
The Seven Junipers 116
Old Cypress and Rock 119

The Thatched Hut of Dreaming of an Immortal 120
Hills and Streams After Rain 122
Life Cycle of the Lotus 124
Saying Farewell at Xunyang 126
Landscape in the Style of Li Tang 131
Peach and Plum Blossom Garden 132
The Golden Valley Garden 133
Landscape with a Lady Overlooking a Lake 134
Fan Painting with Figures 136
The Jade Field 138
Autumn Colors at Xunyang 140
Five Forms of Guanyin 143
Landscape 144
Landscape 147
Landscape Album 149
Album of Eight Landscapes 151
Clearing Autumn Sky over a Fishing Village 153
Drunk in Autumn Woods 154
Fishing in River Country at Blossom Time 156
Wangchuan Villa 160
Zhong Kui and Demons 162

Postscript 164

Appendix: A Brief Chronology of Chinese History 166

PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY



Introduction to Paintings and Calligraphy

A great painting deserves re-reading thousands of times. This pictorial album of Mr. Wan-go H.C. Weng covers many artworks that are national treasures representing cultural ethos. Take the famous *The Thirteen Emperors* as an example. Though anyone familiar with Chinese art history has read it early on, when we revisit it, the different temperaments of ancient emperors still struck a chord. You cannot but admire the artistic standards that artists of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) have accomplished at ease, and would get an idea of the impressively free-flowing, magnificent, and gorgeous styles of the great Tang. Similarly, the *Northern Qi Scholars Collating Classic Texts*, attributed to Yang Zihua, collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, though a copy from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), obviously retains the original painting style, serving as a credible and invaluable source for studying the cultural life, costume and painting styles of Northern Qi scholars and officials.

A Northern Song Dynasty copy of the *Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk*, originally by Zhang Xuan of the Tang Dynasty, portrays the activities of Tang court ladies including preparing cooked silk, ironing, and tailoring. Done by the court painting academy, it is a faithful copy of the original characterized by plump and gorgeous figures with precise and forceful lines, bright and elegant colors, and no background.

The *Palace Ladies Tuning the Lute*, attributed to Zhou Fang, collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, portrays the leisurely lifestyle of Tang imperial court ladies. The physical appearance and costume of the ladies as well as the brushwork are similar to that of the previous painting. The only difference is that there some trees and rocks as background and spacing devices. Its composition structure is relatively simple, but much maturer than the *Spring Outing* by Zhan Ziqian. This piece is rarely seen in publications, but has significant value to studying the evolution of Chinese painting.

Unlike Tang paintings of court ladies, the *Palace Banquet*, by an unknown artist from the Five Dynasties (907-960), collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, portrays a grand scene of three dozens of court ladies arranging a dinner in a palace garden. The figures in Tang costume have various movements and lively postures that echo each other. The overlooking perspective adds to the depth and breath of the palace, luxurious yet elegant. The figures, boundaries, trees and rocks are very well done, suggesting the artist's extraordinary skill. The delicate and gentle brushwork, with a touch of painting styles of the south, suggests that the work very likely an imperial court painting from the Southern Tang Dynasty (937-975).

Landscape painting flourished during the Five Dynasties and the Northern Song Dynasty when many famous artists and many excellent works emerged. *A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks*, attributed to Li Cheng, and *Fishermen's Evening Song*, attributed to Xu Daoning, both collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art are representative works of that period. *A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks*, without inscriptions, portrays an imposing main peak high above the surrounding peaks, with crouching ridges, cliffs, and desolate trees beneath. Close to the flying waterfall are an inn and a monastery facing each other. There is a scholar on a horse crossing a bridge and slowly coming into the scene. Both this man and travelers who checked in earlier look relaxed and unhurried, not fearful of the treacherous journey. The painting depicts a harmonious co-existence between ancient people and the Nature. As the scene somewhat echoes that of "ridges and peaks rolling, temple and villa half-hidden, and trees thick or thin", the description by an ancient scholar of a landscape painting by Li Cheng, it was attributed by later generations to Li. Though the attribution is not necessarily correct, this painting is definitely a great piece of realistic landscape paintings from the Northern Song Dynasty. The *Fishermen's Evening Song*, attributed to Xu Daoning but without inscriptions, portrays steep mountains and deep, wide valleys across the river in the background with strong strokes, exuding a quiet remoteness. In the foreground, fishermen are spreading nets and travelers coming home from afar on the open river. It presents a grand open scene so fascinating that one wants to be there personally. This painting is traditionally recognized as a masterpiece by Xu Daoning.

In the late Northern Song Dynasty, Mi Fu and Mi Youren, father and son, opened a new horizon of Chinese literati painting. Ever since, the Mi's "falling eggplant" approach has been a regular formula in painting misty landscapes. The *Cloudy Mountains*, attributed to Mi Youren, collected in the MET, touches up trees, rocks, clouds, springs, and undulating peaks with interwoven dry and wet, light and heavy ink stokes. The landscape appears vague, blurring form and substance. Its abstractness breathed fresh air into freehand landscape painting of the Yuan and Ming dynasties.

Landscape paintings from the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) are obviously much simpler than the realistic ones from the Northern Song Dynasty. Commonly seen in paintings of this period are a few huge rocks, two or three waning willows, a corner of a hill against a misty river on which a small boat is floating. The conception grew smaller, but the poetic touch grew stronger. The *Bare Willows and Distant Mountains* attributed to Ma Yuan and *Twelve Views of Landscape* attributed to Xia Gui, currently in the U.S., are cases in point. The epoch-defining portrayal of hills and rocks done in sloppy "axe-stoke" texture, iron-like green pines and willows, and cloudy, distant peaks, slopes, and banks draw the audience into a poetic ambiance of peace, leisure and haziness.

The *Twin Pines, Level Distance,* attributed to Zhao Mengfu of the early Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368) (currently collected in the MET), incorporated a new style that was built on previous ones and advocated for simplicity and ease, quite different from the imperial court style of the Southern Song Dynasty. Drawing upon some forms created by Li Cheng and Guo Xi of the Northern Song Dynasty, Zhao portrayed trees, rocks and distant peaks with skillful, measured yet free-flowing calligraphic strokes that blend dry and wet ink. Abandoning gradation and coloring, this fresh, pure and elegant style embodies his detached attitude as well as his inheriting and reinvention of tradition. Zhao Mengfu pushed the envelope of playing with brush and ink in Chinese painting. His style was widely adopted by later literati painters.

Wang Meng, grandson of Zhao Mengfu, was good at portraying secluded mountain forests where reclusive men of letters live. The *Quiet Life in a Wooded Glen*, by Wang at age 54 and collected in the Art Institute of Chicago, portrays a scholar sitting upright in a thatched cottage on the slope of a creek against imposing pines, and hidden under lush trees. Outside the house are reddening maples, while indoors a stove is boiling medicinal herbs, and behind the cottage are towering peaks. The extremely remote and quiet environment provides an ideal place for southern literati who suffered discrimination in the Yuan Dynasty to lead a secluded life. The forceful yet graceful "unraveled rope" texturing brushwork, built on the long texturing technique created by Ju Ran of the Northern Song Dynasty, complements the secluded forest conception.

Down to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), representative landscape painters were the Four Masters of Wumen School, i.e., Shen Zhou, Tang Yin, Wen Zhengming and Qiu Ying. They inherited the traditions of the Yuan and Ming dynasties yet were distinctive in their own ways. The four masters, along with Chen Chun and Lu Zhi, pupils of Wen, were highly accomplished and revered by later generations. The *Autumn Mountains* by Wen, *The Thatched Hut of Dreaming of an Immortal* by Tang, *Hills and Streams After Rain* by Chen Chun and *Autumn Colors at Xunyang* by Lu Zhi included in this album interpret ancient people in their own languages with distinct features, standing out among traditional Chinese paintings with their well-deserved reputation.

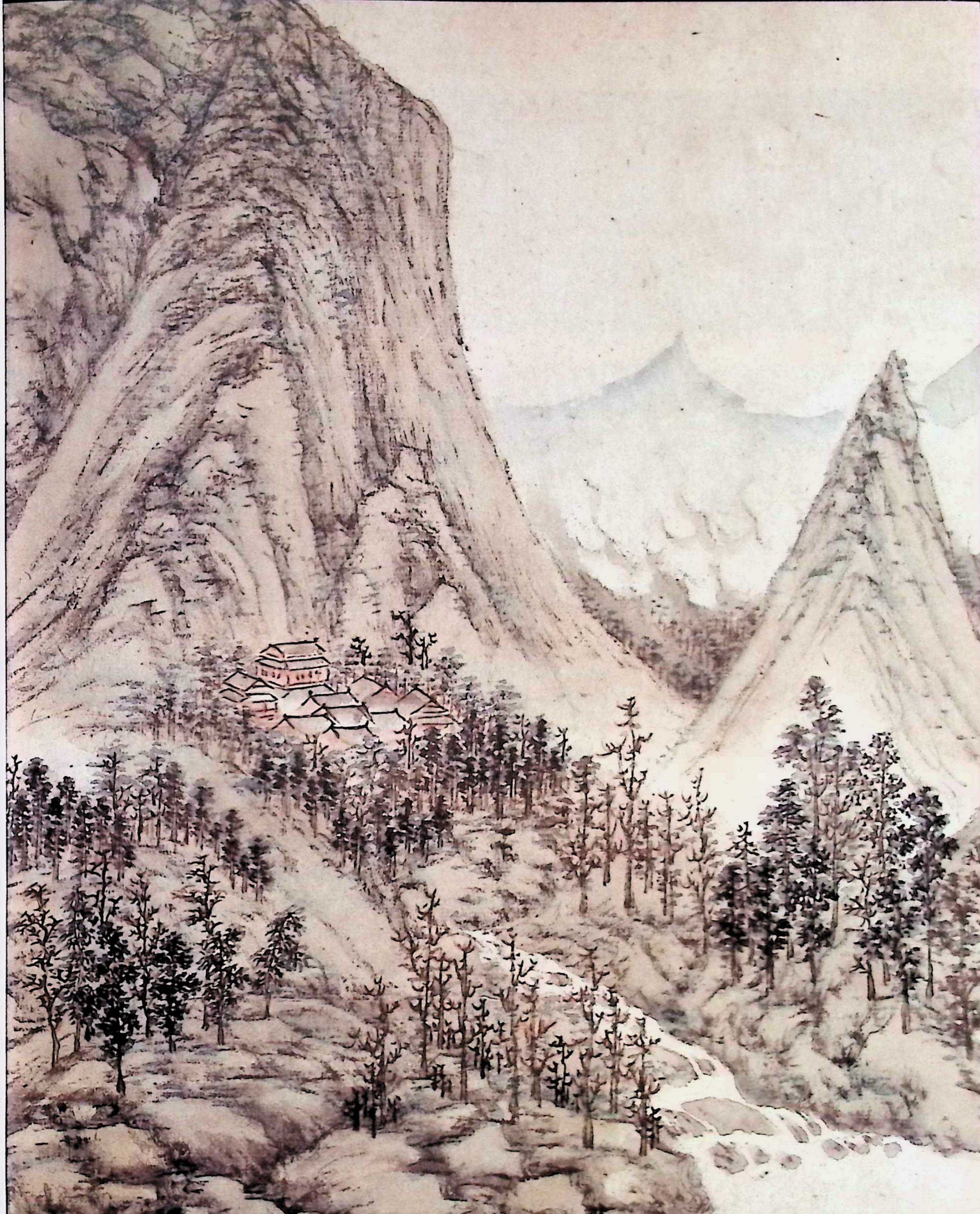
The period between the late Ming Dynasty and the early Qing Dynasty saw a boom of diverse paintings. Due to their recent age, paintings in this period are more likely to be seen by modern readers. Thus, this album only selects a few. The *Five Forms of Guanyin*, an exquisite piece of work attributed to Ding Yunpeng, combines line drawing with heavy colors, exuding a bright and elegant touch. The *Landscape Album* scroll, attributed to Gong Xian, is an excellent piece portraying rolling mountains and dense forests with a heavy, gloomy air. The *Album of Eight Landscapes* by Zhu Da (or Bada Shanren), drawing upon the paintings of Dong Qichang, Huang Gongwang, Ni Yunlin, Mi Fu and Mi Youren, presents a group of distinctively amazing views and scenes with seal-script-like, humble strokes, cool, profound, yet mellow. The *Drunk in Autumn Woods*, attributed to Shi Tao, depicts a scene of autumnal suburbs Shi and his friends have seen. At the foreground is a household along a river outside the city, half hidden in dense trees and morning mists, and several scholars walking through a bridge, beneath which are rippling clear waters and waving water grass in the morning breeze. Further on the riverside, a boat just moored, and an old man is landing with a walking stick. The dense woods are turning red, greeting the eyes of groups of tourists who are seated or lying down under the trees. In the distance are endless fields and green hills clouded in the mists. The scene it portrays is stunning, and seems open and mighty from an overlooking-from-afar perspective. Plus the free-flowing brushwork at ease, this painting excels in both landscape and mood. Judging from its painting technique and "at Qinglian Cottage" as inscribed, it is presumed to be drawn by Shi Tao in his late years after he settled in Yangzhou. This piece is accompanied by three postscripts by the painter, each containing a poem. Thus, it is obviously one of the painter's finest creations. The *Wangchuan Villa* by Wang Yuanqi, also collected in the MET, is probably the longest, most time-consuming painting with the most complex composition Wang has ever created in his lifetime. With his consistently humble yet mellow strokes, light ink dryly swiped and layered, Wang created his version of Wang Wei's *Wangchuan Villa* as imagined. Small views of pavilions and gardens are well-proportioned amid lush forest on tall hills, surrounded by a river and flying waterfalls, hidden under green bamboos and red trees. The owner may spend his time boating, dining, farming, or losing himself in nature. Wang Yuanqi was not good at painting human figures, buildings and animals. Nevertheless, to pay his homage to Wang Wei, father of literati painting and a great poet, he did not hide his flaws and carefully arranged all elements. Upon sketching, he applied blue and green colors, and finished it adding some red. The whole painting took him nine months, but the result was worth it. This piece of work is refreshing but humble, and primitively simple yet modern. It is a great piece of work that still shines centuries later.

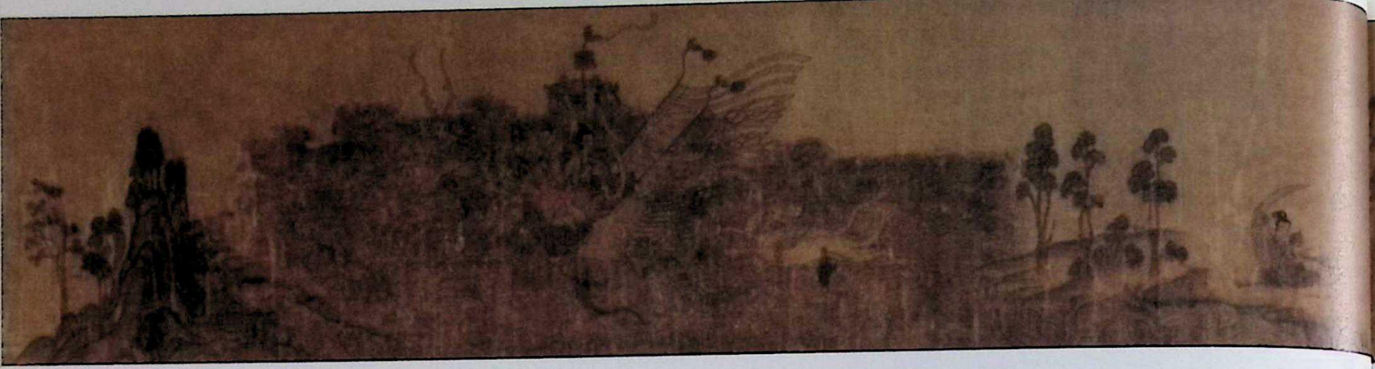
In addition to figure and landscape paintings, this album also includes a few flower-and-bird paintings, including *Nine Dragons* by Chen Rong of the Southern Song Dynasty, *Fish Swimming amid Falling Flowers* attributed to Liu Cai, *A Breath of Spring* by Zou Fulei of the Yuan Dynasty, and ink bamboo paintings by Li Kan, Wang Fu and Xia Chang. Such diversity is intended to reflect painter-specific specialties and prevailing trends in different periods from varying perspectives.

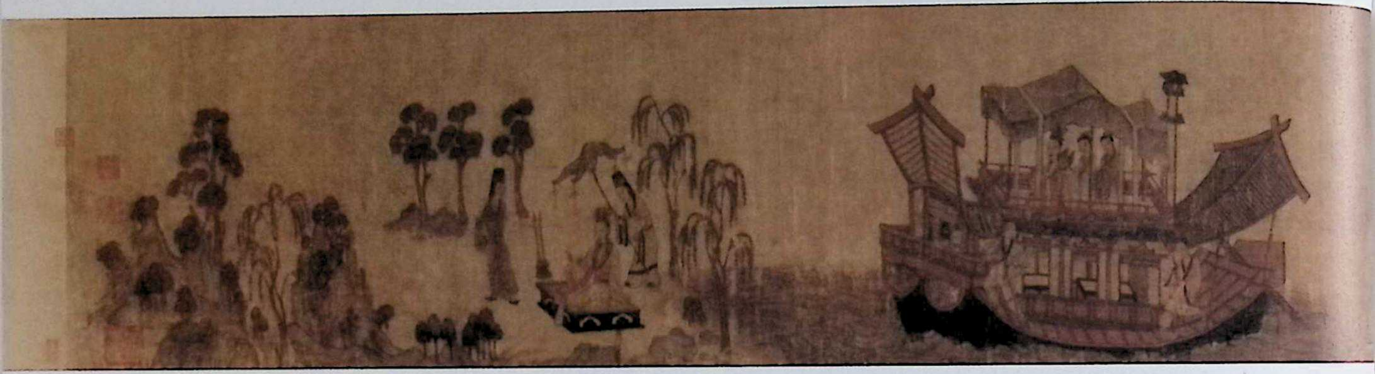
Yin Guanghua

Connoisseur of ancient Chinese paintings and calligrapgy

July 2016

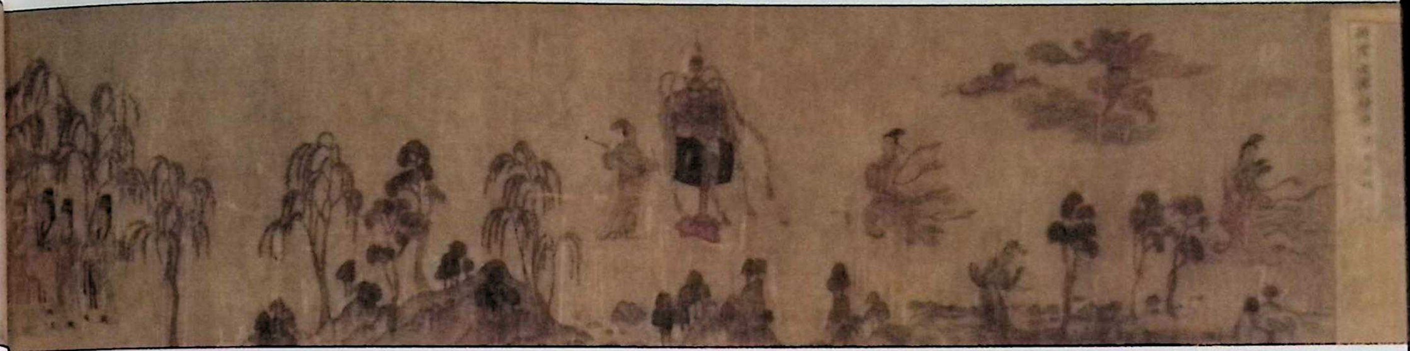






The *Nymph of the Luo River*, a classic theme in the history of Chinese painting, is inspired by, as its name suggests, the *Nymph of the Luo River* written by Cao Zhi (192-232). According to existing literature, Gu Kaizhi (348-409) in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420) was the first painter who created a painting for this story. There are three extant pieces of the *Nymph of the Luo River* attributed to Gu. One piece is collected in the Freer Gallery of Art, while the other two are collected in the Palace Museum and the Liaoning Provincial Museum respectively. Currently, scholars generally believe that all the three pieces are in fact the Song Dynasty (960-1279) copies. The similarity between the three is probably due to their origin in the same ancestor copy.

However, this does not reduce the historical and artistic value of this painting. A look at the Freer copy from right to left would reveal that as the story unfolds, the Goddess of the Luo River and Cao Zhi, the two protagonists, appear repeatedly, which is a distinct feature of early narrative painting. Besides, human figures obviously take up a bigger

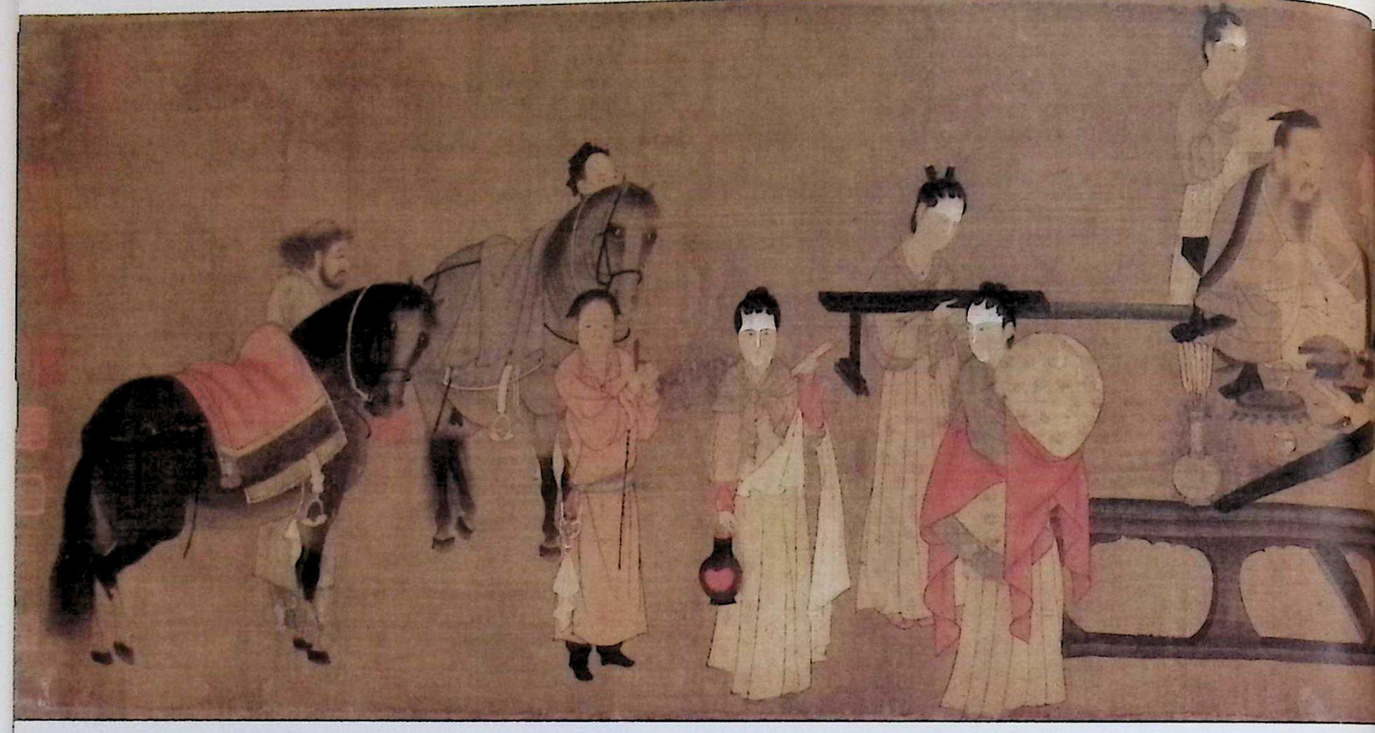


Nymph of the Luo River

Eastern Jin Dynasty (Song Dynasty copy)
Attributed to Gu Kaizhi
Ink and Color on Silk
24.2 × 310.9 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

proportion than landscape in the background, consistent with the "figures taking up disproportionately more space than landscape" characteristic of early paintings as recorded in relevant literature. Without an earlier master copy, this copy undoubtedly provides the best basis for us to peek into the original period of Chinese painting through the eyes and hands of Song artists.

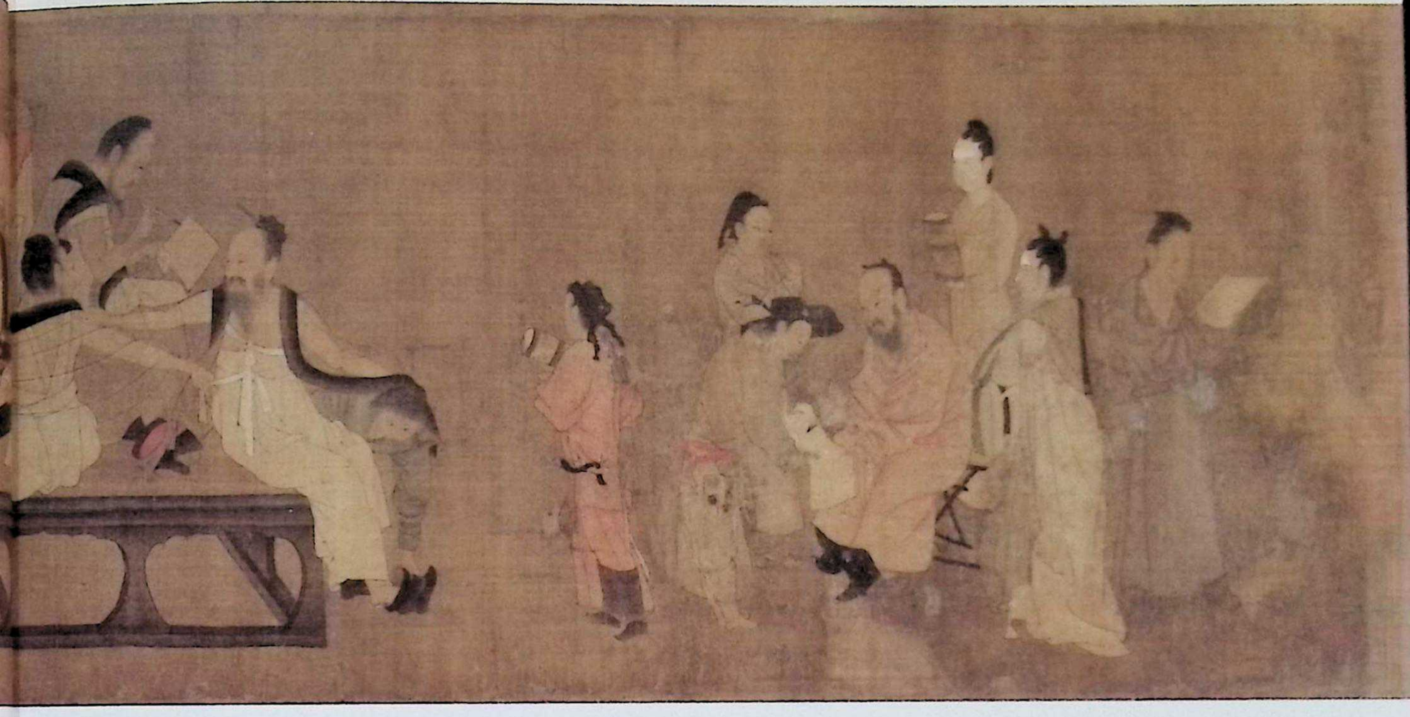
This scroll was once in the hands of Duan Fang, a high-ranking official and a renowned collector in the late Qing Dynasty. Later, as the Qing empire fell apart, and people were dislocated, many cultural relics inevitably got lost or scattered. As a result, this painting ended up overseas. Prior to the Dragon Boat Festival in 1914, Freer received an urgent telegram from John C. Ferguson, knowing that the Duan family was desperate to sell this painting, but required the payment of one hundred thousand dollars right away by telegraphic transfer. Freer did not hesitate and decided promptly to buy it. This is how the *Nymph of the Luo River* became one of the most important treasures of the Freer Gallery of Art.



Northern Qi Scholars Collating Classic Texts

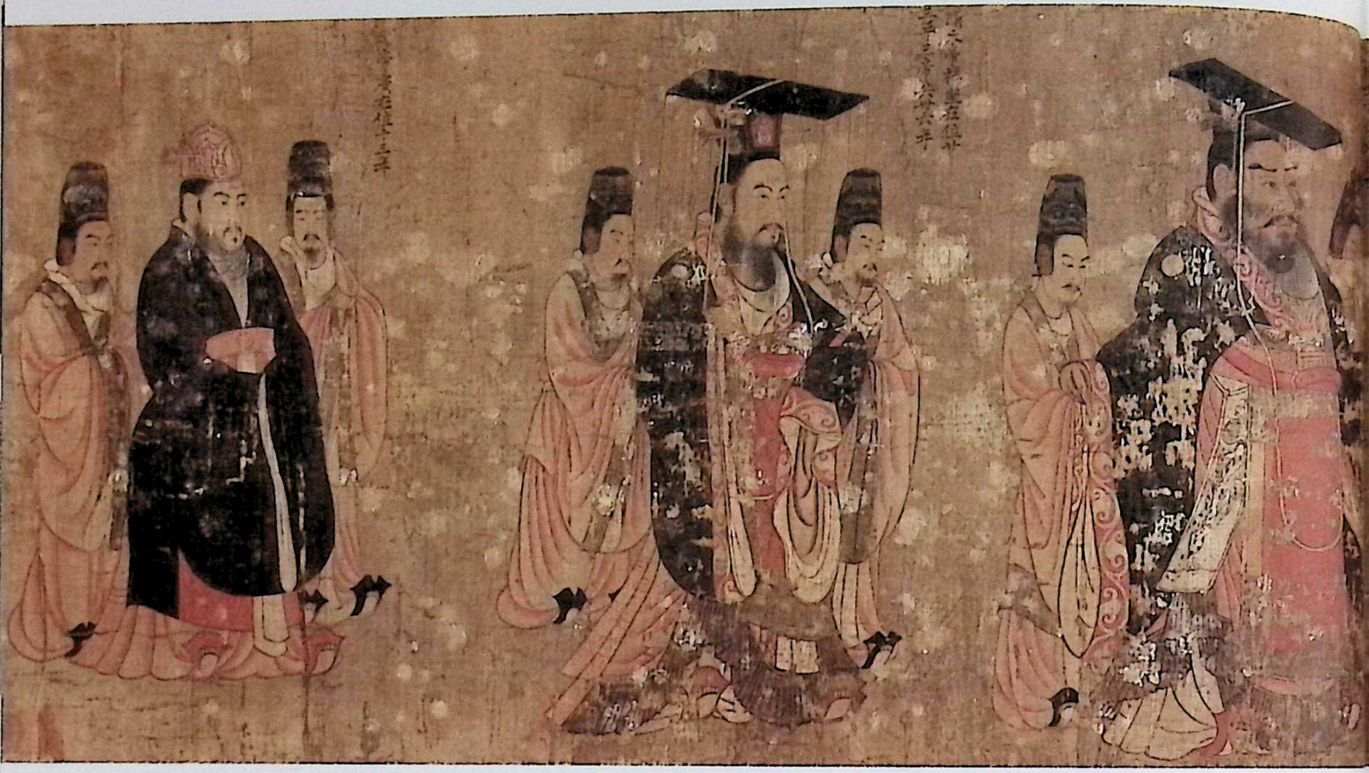
Northern Qi Dynasty (Song Dynasty copy)
Attributed to Yang Zihua
Ink and Color on Silk
29.3 × 122.7 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This painting is presumed to be a scene of scholars collating the Five Classics and important history books under the orders of Gao Yang, Emperor Wenxuan of the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-577, a dynasty of the Northern and Southern Dynasties), in the 7th year of the Tianbao reign (556). It was previously attributed to Yan Liben (601-673), a famous painter of the Tang Dynasty, but is currently attributed by most scholars to Yang Zihua (birth and death years unknown), a renowned painter of the Northern Qi Dynasty. Compared with murals uncovered at Lou Rui's Tomb of that period, similarities do exist as the human figures all have oval faces. Yang Zihua, revered as "sage in painting", was an official painter for Gao Zhan, Emperor Wucheng of the Northern Qi Dynasty. According to literature, Yang was good at painting figures, palace gardens, carriages and horses. Legends have it that the horses he drew even gave

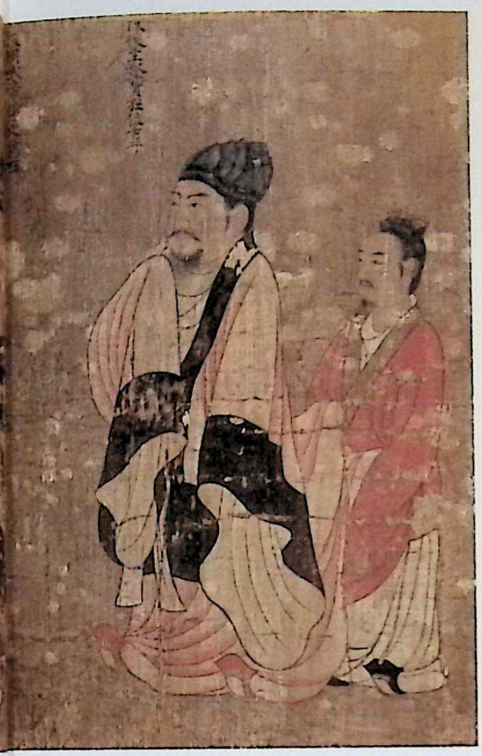


viewers at night an illusion of hearing them whinnying. This painting does include several saddled horses. But why did horses appear in a painting of such subject? It is probably because the Song painter who copied it got the order of parts in the scroll wrong, or even mixed in it one part of another scroll. Anyway, given the scarcity of literature on early figure painting, this piece serves as an important pathway for us to get a grip on the painter Yang Zihua and general painting style of the Northern Qi Dynasty.

At the end of this scroll are postscripts added by Fan Chengda, Han Yuanji and Lu You, among other scholars. According to the stamps of collectors, it was once in the hands of Liang Qingbiao, An Qi and Hongxiao, Prince of Yi of the Qing Dynasty, among others. After the demise of the Qing, many antiques ended up overseas. This *Northern Qi Scholars Collating Classic Texts* was one of them. In 1931, this painting was donated by Denman Waldo Ross, an American collector, to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, becoming one of this museum's most important Chinese paintings.



In terms of scroll painting, there is very little literature on early figure paintings. This fact makes *The Thirteen Emperors* espcially precious. Since it saw the light of day in the early 20th century, this scroll has drawn wide interests from scholars and the general public. According to postscripts at the end, this piece is attributed to Yan Liben (601-673), a figure painter of the early Tang Dynasty (or to Lang Yuling, another painter of the early Tang Dynasty). From right to left, this scroll portrays in order 13 emperors since the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 25), plus 33 attendants. Each image of the emperor is accompanied by a caption that notes his identity. This inherited the characteristics seen in early figure paintings on portrait stones of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). The images of attendants are relatively smaller than these central figures, which has its origin in the tradition of early figure paintings and also complies with the hierarchical ethics of the time. The painter focused on portraying the varying images of emperors in order to show their distinct personality and temperament. Interestingly, the personalities of emperors shown in this scroll exactly correspond with historical records. For example, Yang Guang, Emperor

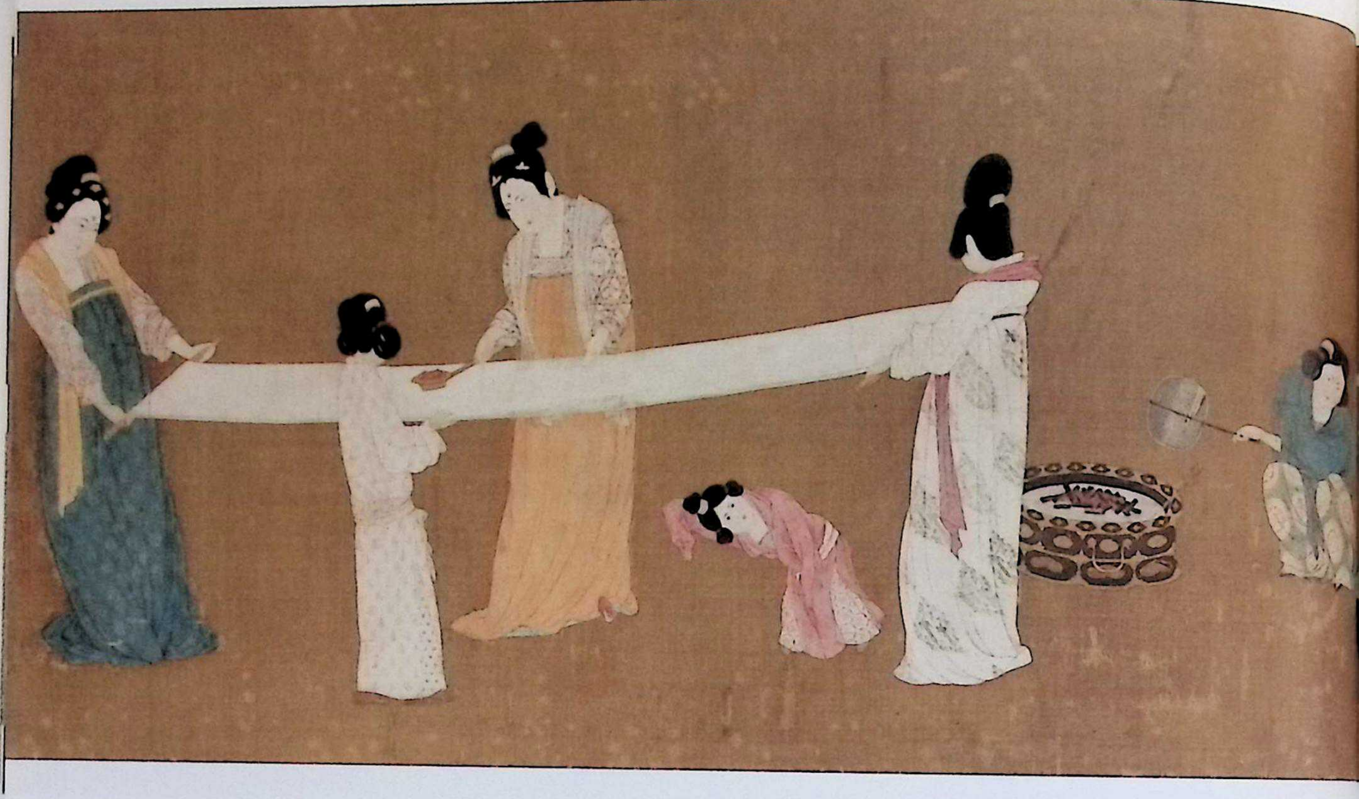


The Thirteen Emperors

Tang Dynasty
Attributed to Yan Liben
Ink and Color on Silk
51.3 × 531 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Yang of the Sui Dynasty, is portrayed with a handsome face and a fat body, echoing the description of "pretty and hedonistic". Meanwhile, Emperor Yang Jian is portrayed with deep eyes and tight lips, corresponding to the description of "ambitious, decisive and resourceful". The images and expressions are quite vivid.

This scroll has a postscript by Fu Bi, a renowned prime minister of the Northern Song Dynasty. It was therefore frequently seen in literature on painting and history, and was in the hands of Liang Hongzhi in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China (1912-1949). In 1931, it was acquired by Denman W. Ross who later donated it to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA). Kojiro Tomita, then curator of the Oriental Art Department, MFA, recalled later that Ross bought this scroll at his suggestion. Tracing back two years, namely in 1929, when this scroll was on exhibition in Tokyo, Japan wanted to purchase it, but gave up after the failed negotiation on price. As a result, Kojiro Tomita was once blamed by his country time and again for his role in the acquisition of this scroll by the MFA.

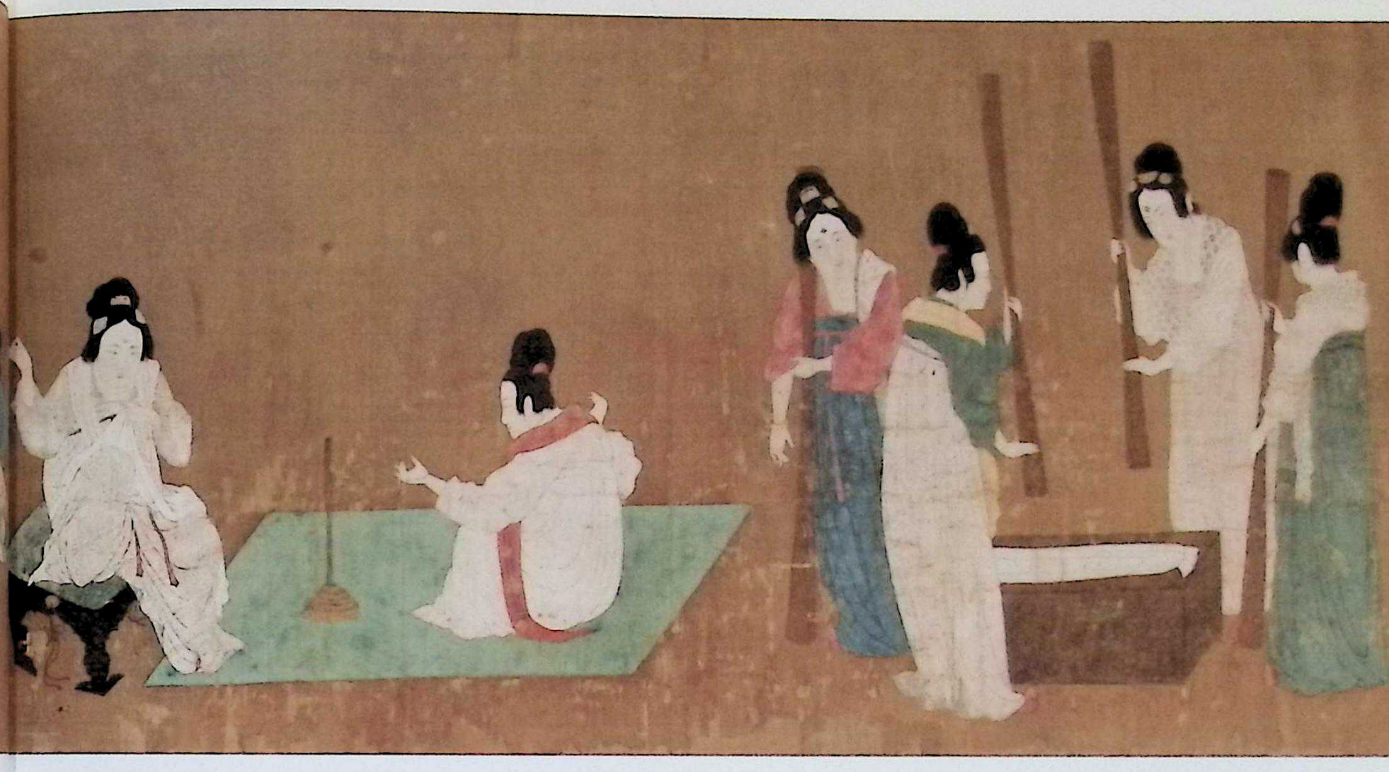


Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk

Tang Dynasty (Song Dynasty copy)
Attributed to Zhang Xuan
Ink and Color on Silk
37 × 145.3 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Preparing newly woven silk, i.e., the processing of cloth before official garment-making, was a major productive activity of ancient women at the turn of summer and autumn. As early as the Han and Wei periods, there had been poems on this activity. According to the *Notes on Past Famous Paintings* by Zhang Yanyuan of the Tang Dynasty, many painters of the Eastern Jin Dynasty painted about the preparation of woven silk. After the creation of this painting by Zhang Xuan (birth and death years unknown), this motif was often revisited by painters of later generations. However, this piece stood out as the most famed of its kind throughout history.

This painting portrays 12 women who, judged from their costume, are supposed to be imperial court ladies back then. In addition to the preparation of cooked silk, it also shows in detail thread trimming and ironing among other processes. Through elegant, dignified and demure court ladies under his brush, Zhang Xuan, a master of figure painting of

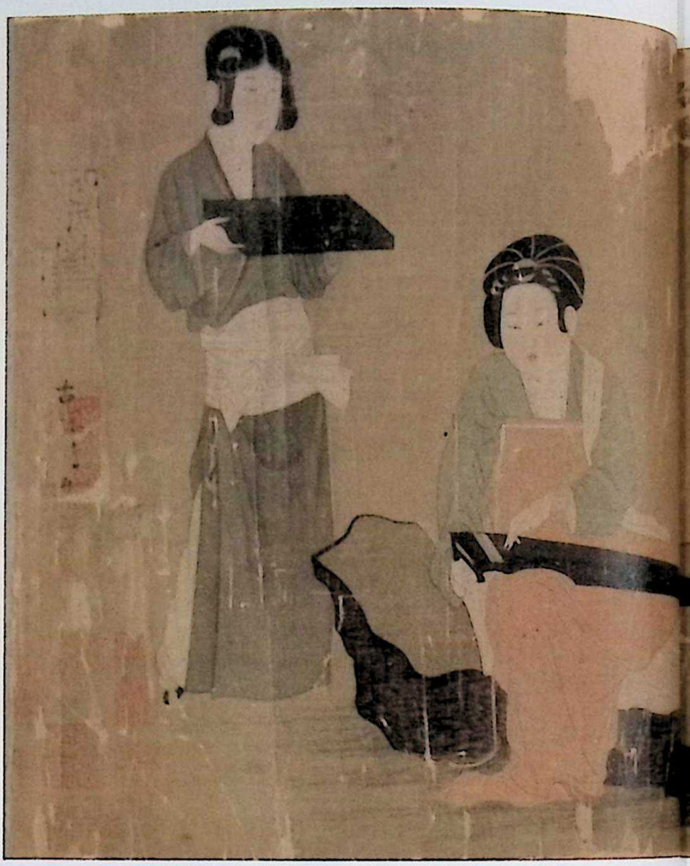


the Tang Dynasty, fully presented the fashion of plumpness as a criterion of beauty during the Tang.

Unfortunately, as with many early paintings, this piece was not created by Zhang, but a copy by a painter of the Song Dynasty based on the original. It was once held by the Imperial Storehouse of the Kin Dynasty (1115-1234) after Kin captured Bianjing, capital of the Northern Song Dynasty, in 1126. Later, it was acquired by Gao Shiqi, a renowned scholar of the Qing Dynasty. According to textual research, Kakuzō Okakura, then an adviser to the Oriental Art Department, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston visited China in 1912 and acquired a large number of ancient Chinese paintings and curios, including this one. In November 2012, during the "Exhibition on Precious Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy from the Five Dynasties, Song and Yuan Dynasties Collected in U.S. Museums" at the Shanghai Museum, the *Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk* was temporarily back home after it had left the country for a century.

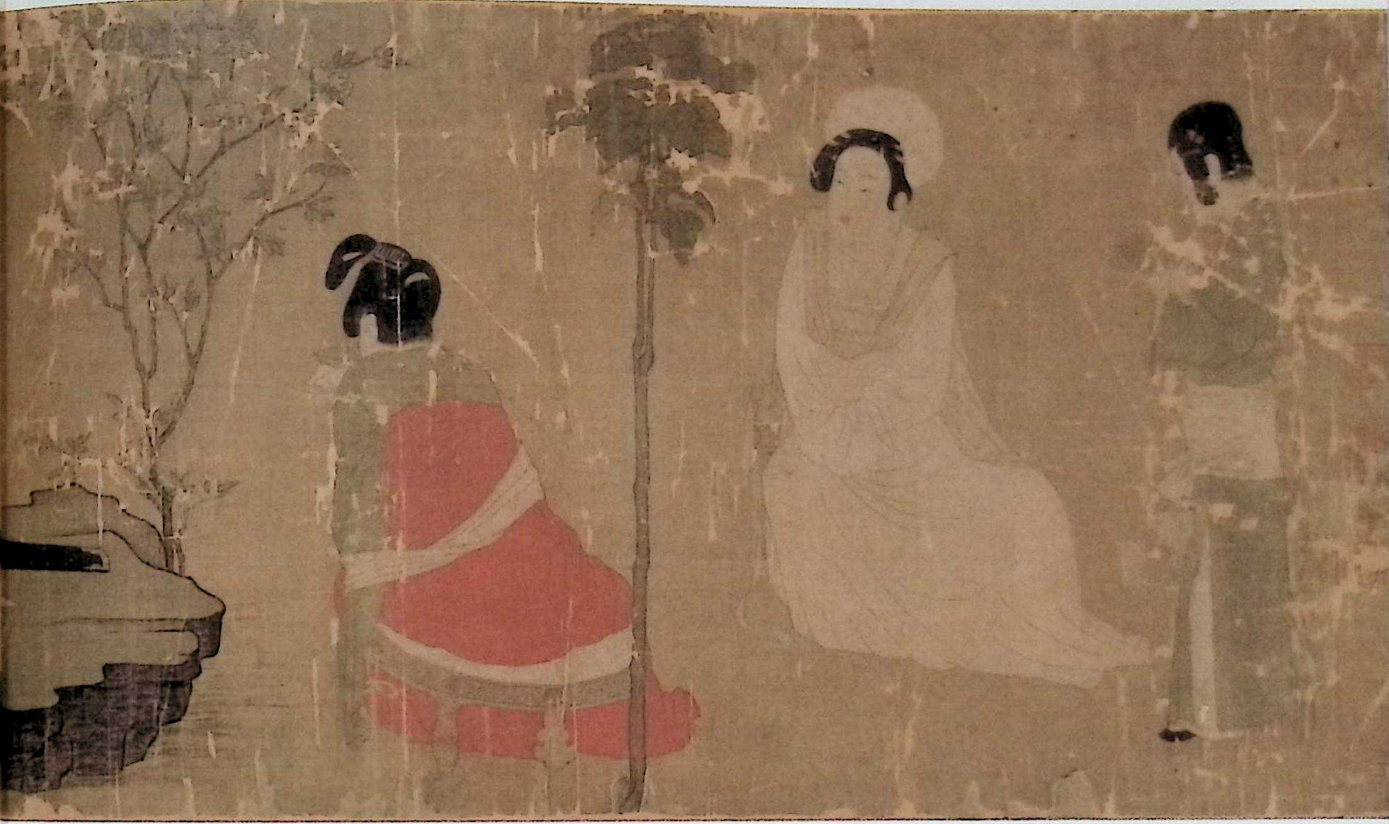
Palace Ladies Tuning the Lute

Tang Dynasty
Attributed to Zhou Fang
Ink and Color on Silk
27.94 × 75.26 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



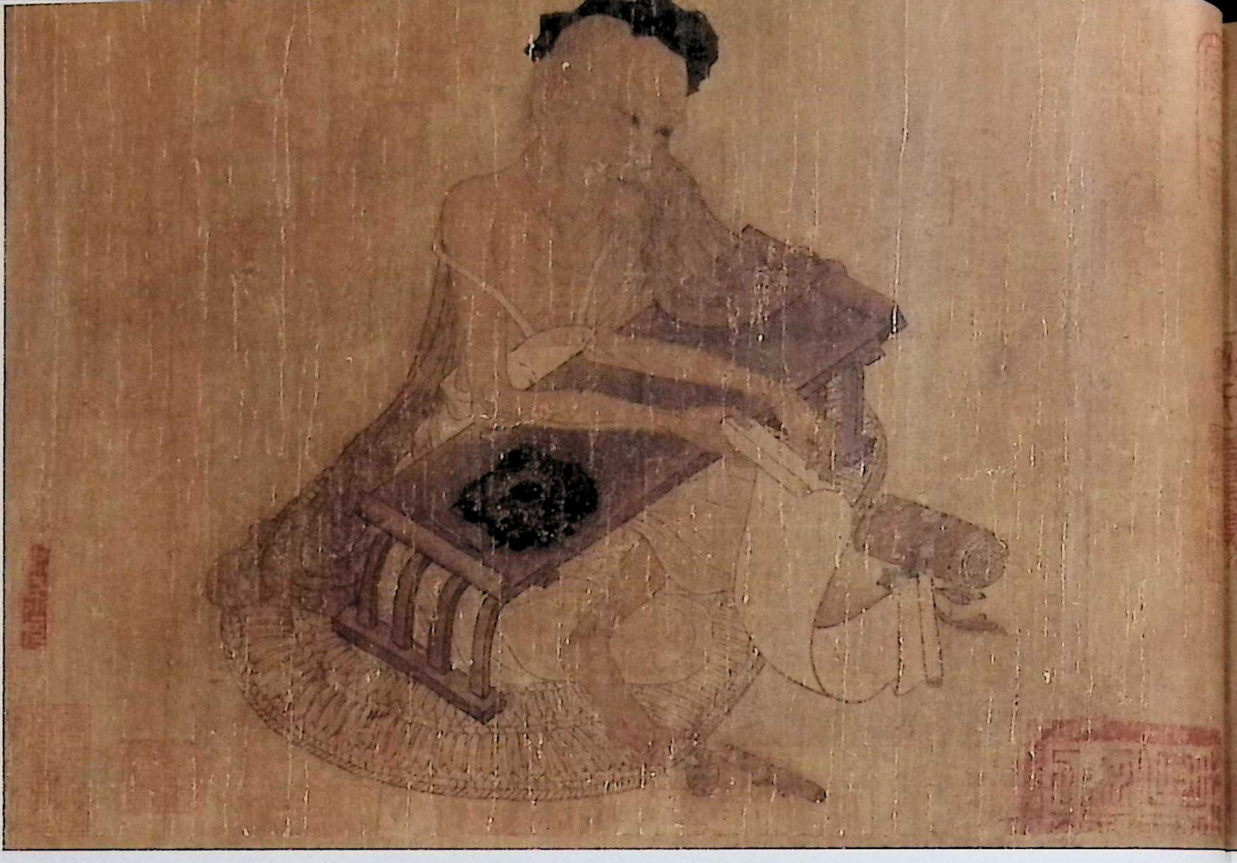
Zhou Fang (birth and death years unknown) is a renowned master of figure painting of the Tang Dynasty for his paintings featuring imperial court ladies and Buddhist figures. Most of his paintings have been lost over the past centuries. Extant ones attributed to him mostly portray the life scenes of noble women. This piece of work portrays three aristocratic ladies, accompanied by two maids, sitting quietly, tuning a *qin* or sipping tea. Like other paintings attributed to Zhou Fang, this piece has limited space for the environment people are in, instead only partitions the space with flowers, trees or rocks. There are only a handful of ladies, but they are portrayed with varied movements and angles, reflecting the painter's attempt to present their beauty from different angles.

It is uncertain if this scroll is an authentic one painted by Zhou Fang. However, seen from the stamp of the "Celestial Realm Book House" of the Northern Song Dynasty on it, this painting is supposed to be a copy



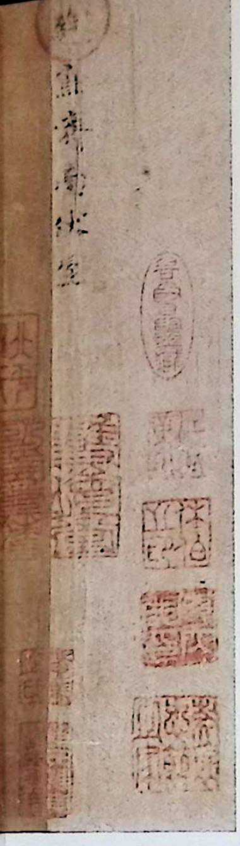
of the Northern Song Dynasty or a later period. There is one painting of the same title collected in the Liaoning Provincial Museum that is very similar to this one, with only differences in costume and other details. Though the Liaoning copy is inscribed with the painter's name "Zhou Fang", was once part of the collections of the Qing Dynasty imperial court, and was recorded in the *Shi Qu Library of Treasured Works* (*Continued*), it is in fact a copy from a supposedly later period. In addition, the Freer Gallery of Art and the Kyoto National Museum respectively house a copy on paper of the Ming Dynasty and a copy on silk with the inscriptions of Qiu Ying.

According to a presentation by Colin Mackenzie, Senior Curator of East Asian Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, at the 2015 International Seminar on the *Shi Qu Library of Treasured Works*, this scroll was bought from Owen Roberts in 1932.



"Fu Sheng Expounding the Classic" was a recurrent theme in ancient Chinese paintings by many painters throughout history. Fu Sheng, the protagonist of this classical allusion, hid the *Book of History* in the walls when the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty burnt books and buried Confucian scholars alive. After the Han Dynasty was founded, Fu taught in the past territories of Qi and Lu states (today's Shandong). When Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty heard of this news, he sent Chao Cuo there to learn from this great man in person. This painting is attributed to Wang Wei (ca. 701-761) who was retroactively recognized as the father of literati painting by books on painting history of the Ming and Qing dynasties and was particularly embraced by literati painters starting from Su Shi (1037-1101) of the Song Dynasty.

This painting only portrays a lean old man sitting on a cattail hassock with his legs crossed, two arms on the desk, the right hand holding a paper scroll while the left hand pointing at the scroll. There is no background other than the figure, furniture, and utensils, which is characteristic of early figure painting. The costume of Fu is quite

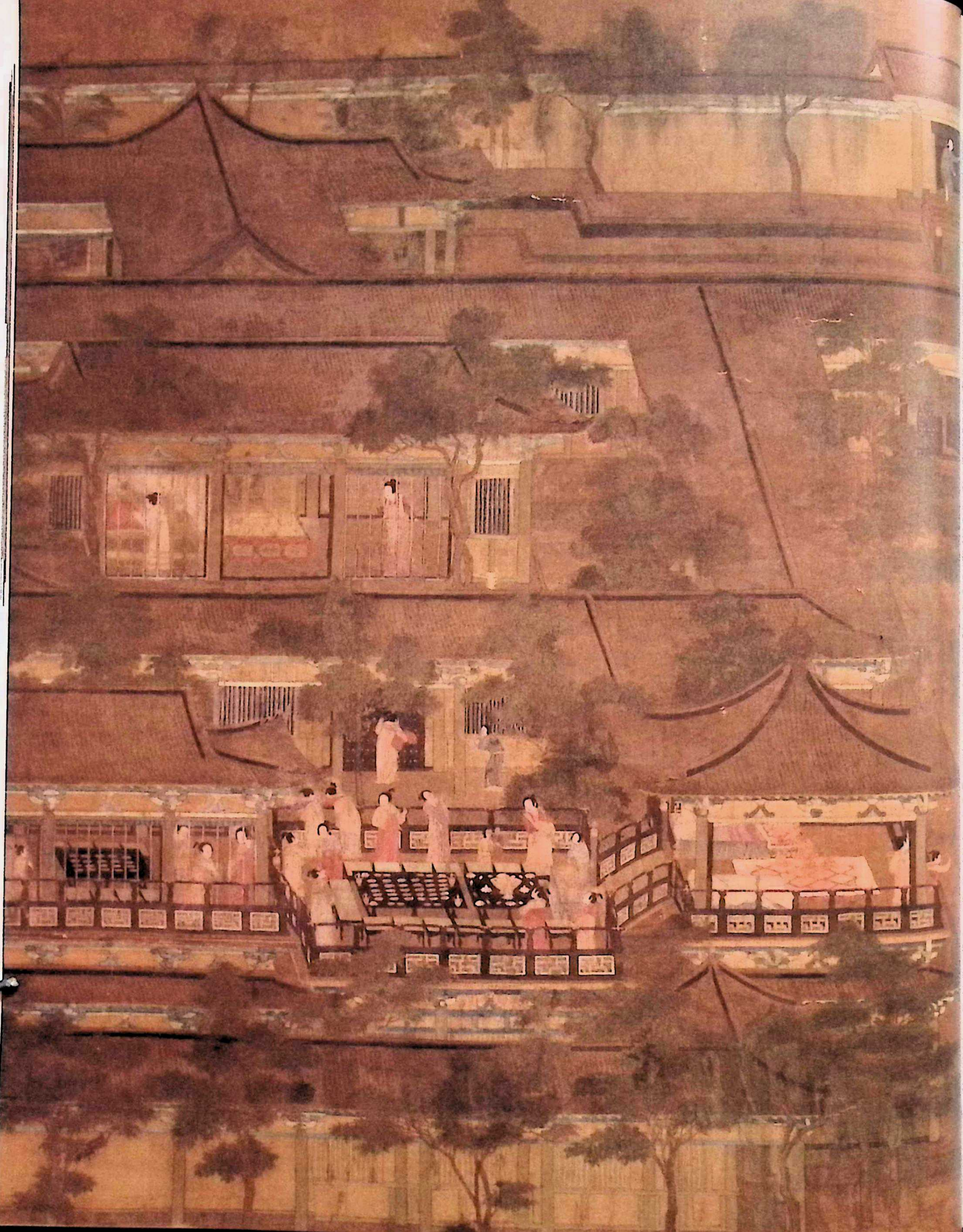


Fu Sheng Expounding the Classic

Tang Dynasty
Attributed to Wang Wei
Ink and Color on Silk
25.4 × 44.7 cm
Collected in the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts

similar to the scholarly attire portrayed in the *Northern Qi Scholars Collating Classic Texts*. The exact period and attribution of this painting can not be pinned down, but it is undoubtedly an extant gem of early Chinese figure paintings.

This painting was once held by the Imperial Storehouse of the Song Dynasty. Its mounting is regarded as the closest form to what are stipulated in the *Forms and Styles in Mounting Paintings and Calligraphy in Shaoxing Imperial Court* under the reign of Emperor Gaozong of the Song Dynasty as is currently known. The text "Fu Sheng in Jinan portrayed by Wang Wei" at the water-proof part of the painting was personally written by Emperor Gaozong. It was obtained by Hu Weiyong in the early Ming Dynasty, then housed in the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty, in the hands of private collectors during the Republic of China, and bought by Fusajiro Abe, a magnate in Japanese textiles in Kansai, in 1925. After Fusajiro Abe died, his son Kojiro Abe donated this painting, along with other 160 plus ancient Chinese paintings and calligraphy, to the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts in 1943.



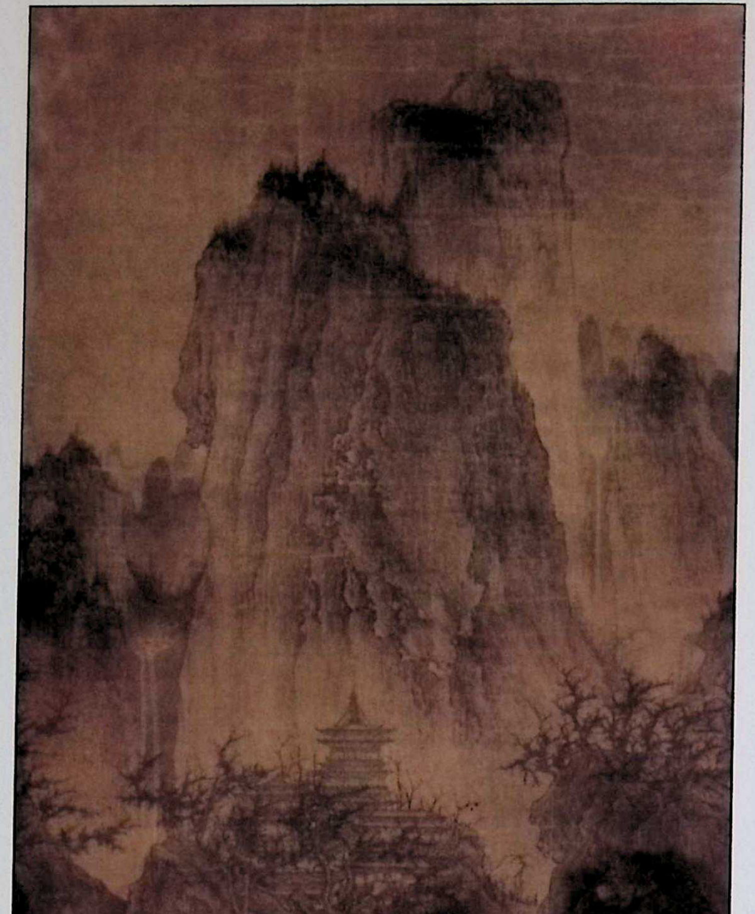
Palace Banquet

Five Dynasties or Northern Song Dynasty
Artist Unknown
Ink and Color on Silk
161.6 × 110.8 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Portrayals of women in classical Chinese paintings roughly fall into two categories: educational or instructive ones portraying the four virtues women should obey (fidelity, physical charm, propriety in speech, and efficiency in needle work), represented by the *Admonitions of the Instructress to Court Ladies*; and those portraying various activities conducted by women and focused on showing female beauty and physical charm, represented by the *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*. This *Palace Banquet* certainly belongs to the latter category.

This painting was initially attributed to a painter of the Tang Dynasty. On its big canvas, the painter portrayed in detail layered courtyards and dozens of women indoors and outdoors. Seen from the scale of buildings and costume of ladies, these are obviously imperial court ladies. Paintings portraying such ladies were very popular in the Tang Dynasty. Nevertheless, such paintings now extant only portray a few ladies against rather simple backgrounds. Such a big scene is not common. Though titled *Palace Banquet*, looked closely, this painting seems to lack an obvious theme. Except for the feast at the center, there are court ladies at every corner of the palace. From a top-down perspective, the painter leads the eyes of viewers through palace walls to appreciate what's inside and outside of the courtyard. Such a composition greatly influenced later court lady paintings. For example, the *Spring Morning in the Han Palace* by Qiu Ying of the Ming Dynasty combines the portrayal of palace buildings with activities of court ladies, only replacing hanging scroll with hand scroll.

Now, this painting is generally believed to be from the Five Dynasties or the Northern Song Dynasty. It is assumed that this piece is probably part of a floor screen given that paintings during this period were often functional and seen from the canvas, palace buildings on both sides seem to be extending beyond the canvas. Originally in the hands of Wang Jiqian, it was donated by Tang Liuqian to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2010.

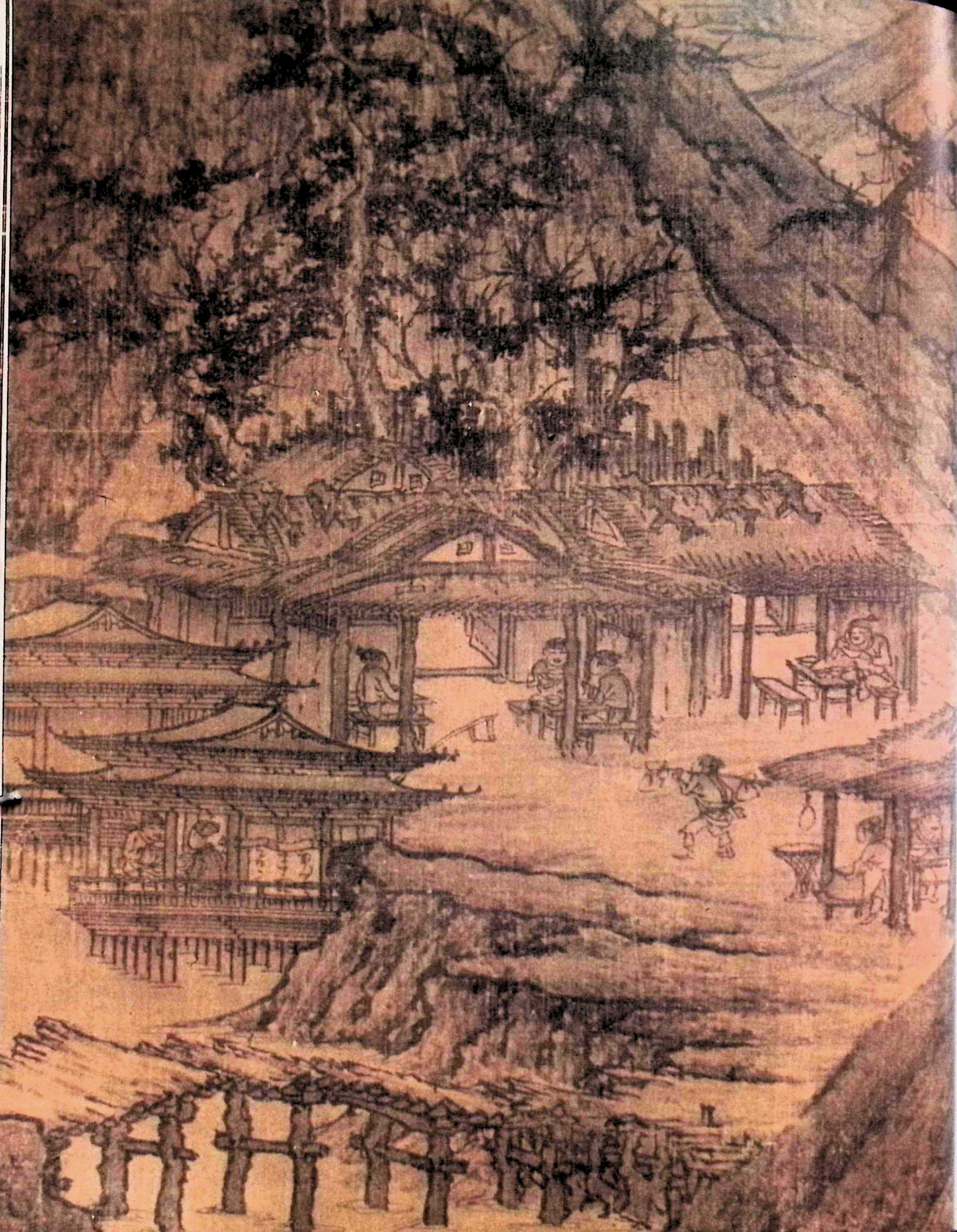


A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks

Northern Song Dynasty
Attributed to Li Cheng
Ink and Slight Color on Silk
111.4 × 56 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

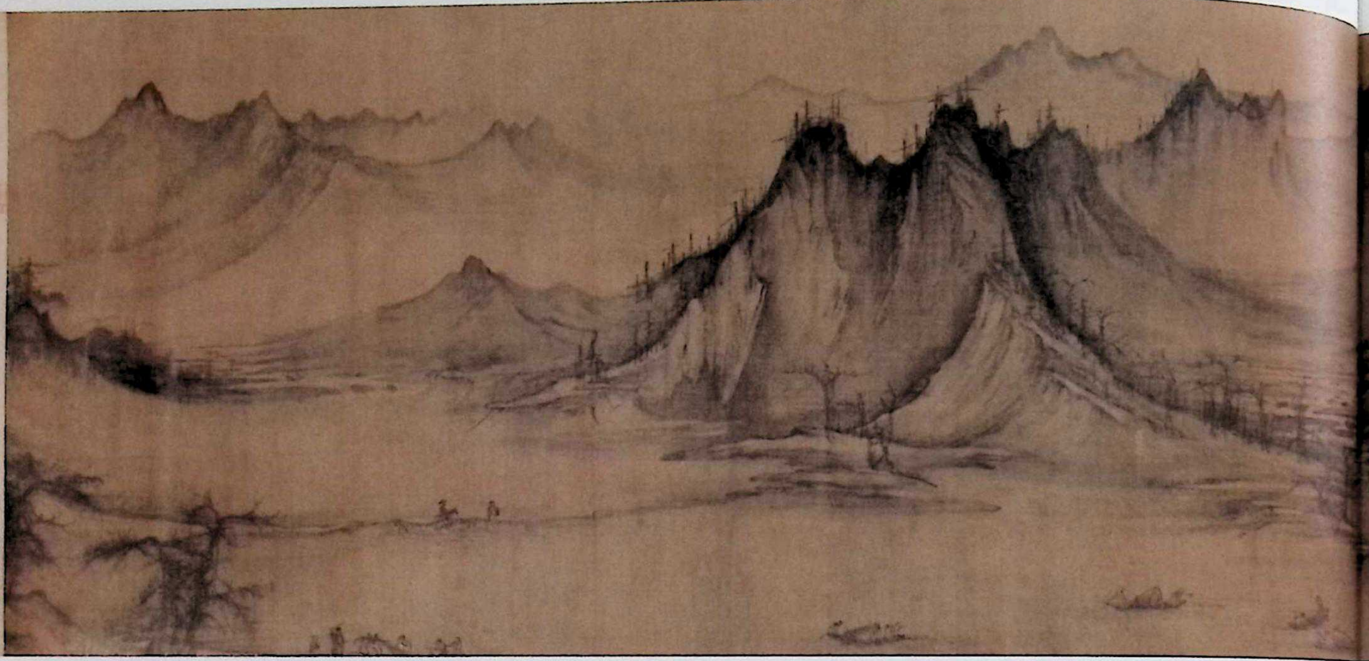
Though without inscriptions, this painting quite matches the description of "ridges and peaks rolling, temple and villa half-hidden" on one of Li Cheng's paintings according to literature. Plus the title "A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks by Li Cheng (919-967), Northern Song Dynasty", it is traditionally attributed to Li. This painting portrays the views of mountain forests in winter: half way up the mountains is an ancient temple hidden under desolate trees, while down the foothills are houses and travelers. According to historical records on painting, Li was good at painting wintry forests "thinly vegetated, misty, peaceful and expanse". His mountains and rocks look like swirling clouds which later generations called "curling clouds texturing"; and his trees are crab claw-shaped which later generations called "crab claw branches". This painting quite tallies with descriptions about Li's painting style as recorded in literature. The truth is, however, paintings by Li Cheng were already rare back in the Northern Song Dynasty. For example, Mi Fu (1051-1107) claimed that he had only seen two authentic paintings by Li Cheng.

This piece of work had never be seen in books or records about painting history written or compiled before the Qing Dynasty, but according to the "Stamp of the Department of State Affairs" on the upper right corner, it was once collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Song



Dynasty. Its whereabouts can not be traced during the Yuan and Ming dynasties, until it ended up in the hands of Liang Qingbiao, a collector of the early Qing Dynasty. According to studies, it was later collected by Xu Qianxue, Miao Yuezao and Xu Weiren, among other people. It is Miao Yuezao who first attributed this painting to Li Cheng and Xu Weiren who officially named it *A Solitary Temple Amid Clearing Peaks*. Later, this painting was brought to Japan where it was purchased by Italian Michelangelo Piacentini who in turn sold it to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1947.

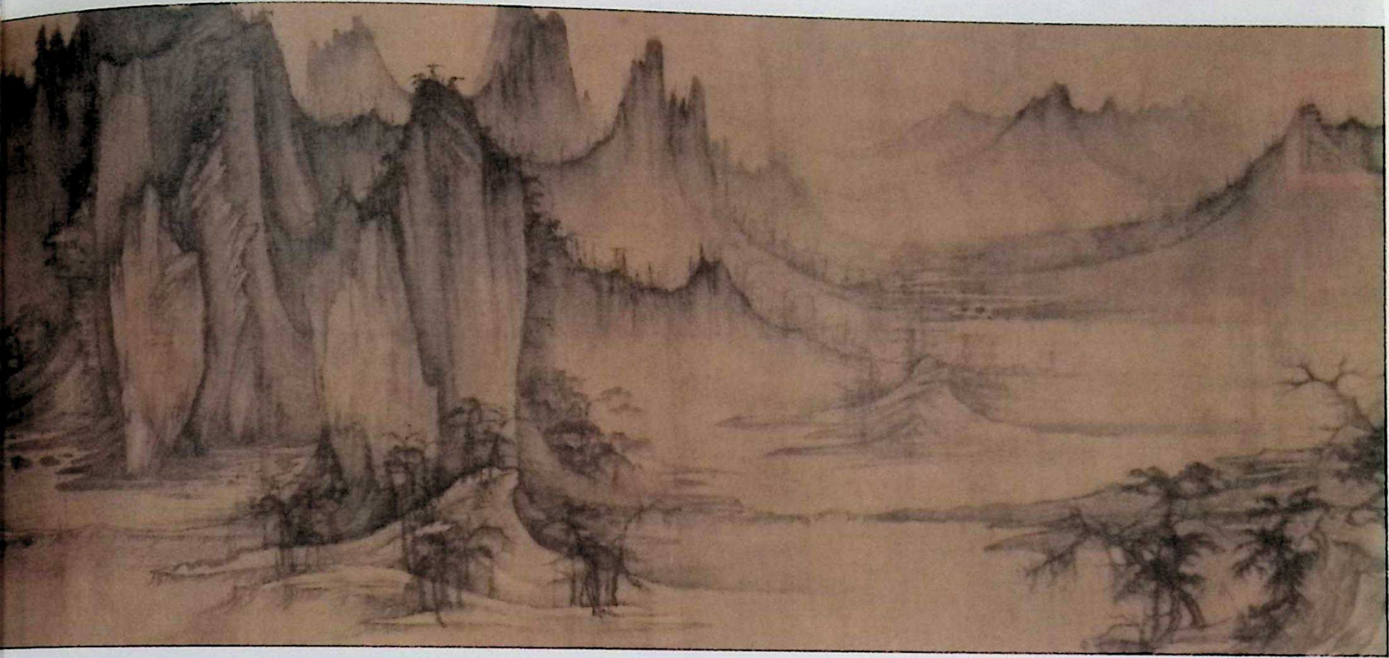
Given the rarity of authentic paintings attributed to Li Cheng, scholars have not yet reached a consensus on what Li's paintings look like. Even if this painting is not an authentic one by Li, it is supposed to be created by a later master hand of the same school. Thus, this piece of work is invaluable for us to peek into painting developments at the turn of the Five Dynasties and the Northern Song Dynasty.



Fishermen's Evening Song
Northern Song Dynasty
ca. 1049 to 1050
Xu Daoning
Ink and Slight Color on Silk
48.26 × 225.4 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

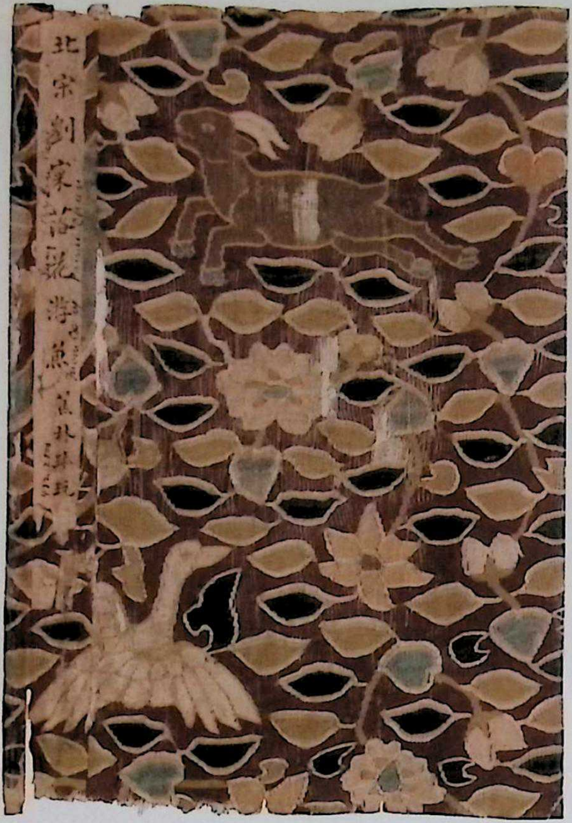
The *Fishermen's Evening Song* is a representative work of Xu Daoning (birth and death years unknown), a painter of the Northern Song Dynasty. In Chinese painting history, the Northern Song Dynasty saw the heyday of landscape painting. Many classical formats of landscape painting took shape during this period, which also saw the emergence of a galaxy of renowned masters. Xu Daoning, with a humble background, though inherited Li Cheng's style, established his own brand. According to literature, Xu was good at portraying desolate natural landscapes including plains, woods, forests, and wild waters. This scroll, though without inscriptions, is generally believed to be an authentic one by Xu as its unique style matches what is recorded in literature about his paintings.

This scroll, more than 200cm in length, portrays stretching mountain ranges and steep peaks. At the foot of the peaks, river valleys have open, misty water surfaces on which a few boats drift around. The canvas is also dotted with a few human figures. Seen from this piece, Xu balanced the depth and height of mountains against the wide, open flatland



landscape, which makes the whole painting profoundly stunning. When drawing the mountains, the painter applied long texture strokes in dark ink from peaks down to foothills, showing his unconstrained brushwork. No wonder Huang Tingjian once praised Xu in a poem, "Splashing ink on the canvas with drunk brush strokes, as if he would not stop even a landslide strikes." The trees, portrayed in bold strokes, have strong, straight branches and leaves portrayed in ink blots. Unlike the pursuit of brushwork by literati painters of later periods, Xu Daoning, living in the Northern Song Dynasty, did not seek to leave traces of brush. Instead, as his contemporary Guo Xi did, he highlighted the effects of objects via repeated, delicate shading and texturing.

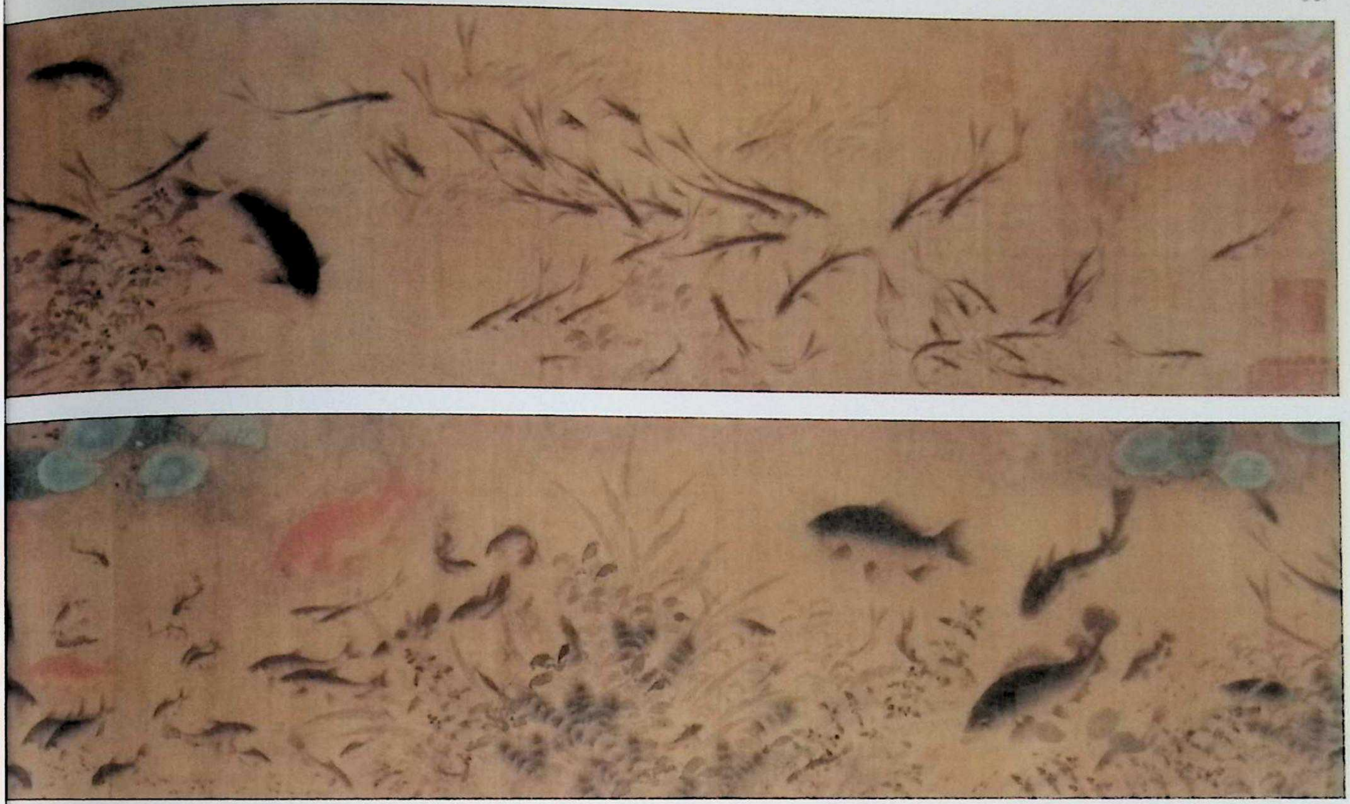
The earliest seal affixed to this painting is the "Shaoxing" stamp under the reign of Emperor Gaozong of the Southern Song Dynasty, which suggests that this scroll was once in the Imperial Storehouse of the Southern Song Dynasty. It was brought to the U.S. during the Republic of China and later acquired by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1933.



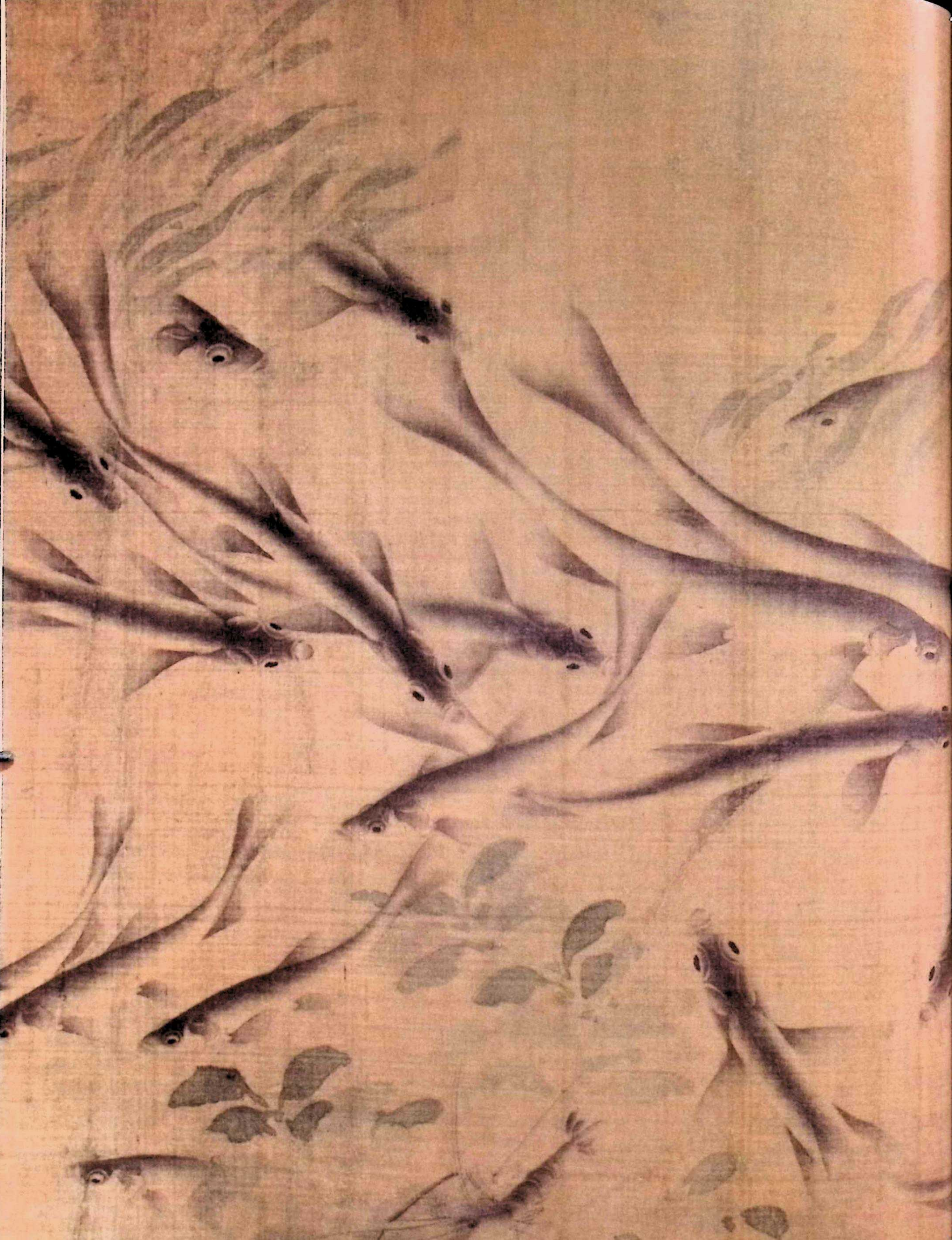
Fish Swimming amid Falling Flowers
Song Dynasty
Attributed to Liu Cai
Ink and Color on Silk
26.4 × 255.3 cm
Collected in the Saint Louis Art Museum

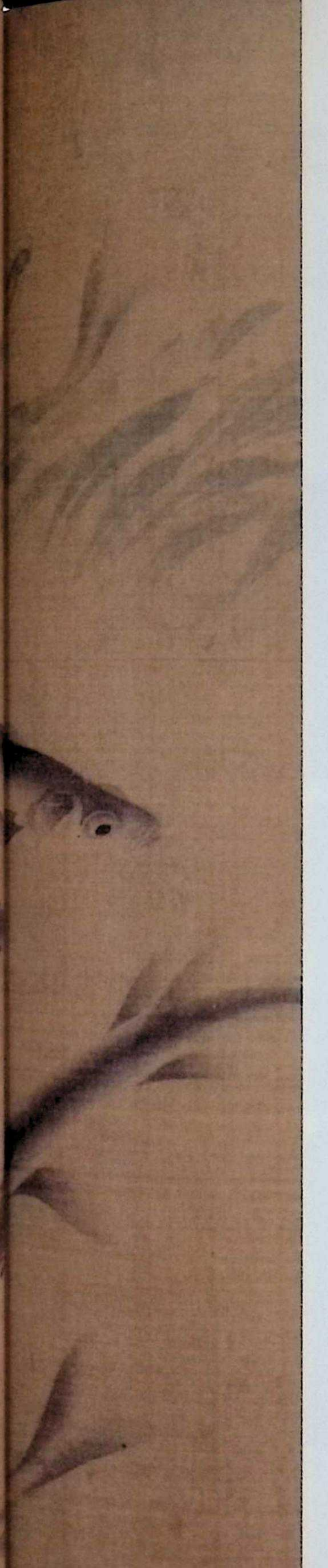
Fish, swimming freely and happily in waters, has long been part of traditional narrative, such as the famous debate on "the happiness of fish" between Zhuangzi and Hui Shi. The image of fish also went into the pictorial system very early. There are fish-shaped decorative patterns on painted pottery basins unearthed at Yangshao Culture sites.

In the Northern Song Dynasty, "fish-dragon" was a dedicated subject of painting, as recounted in the *Xuanhe Catalogue of Paintings*. Liu Cai (birth and death years unknown) is a painter known for his excellence in painting fish. According to literature, the fish he portrayed have "natural postures of absorbed swimming", "mastering the spirit of frolicking far and wide and diving up and down, forgetting each other and letting go of worldly concerns."



This painting derived its name from "Fish Swimming amid Falling Flowers" in clerical script by Wen Peng at the introductory location of the scroll. Though without inscriptions, it is attributed to Liu Cai. The beginning of the scroll is particularly cleverly done, with a branch of blooming peach blossom slanting in, indicating the season. Scattered flowers on the water surface tease a school of fish competing with and chasing each other, the centerpiece of this painting. The scroll portrays fish of varying sizes and different varieties, gathering or parting, floating up or diving down. On the surface are floating lotus leaves, while beneath the water are entangled water grass which serves as a partitioning device and enriches visual effects. Though without a single stroke portraying





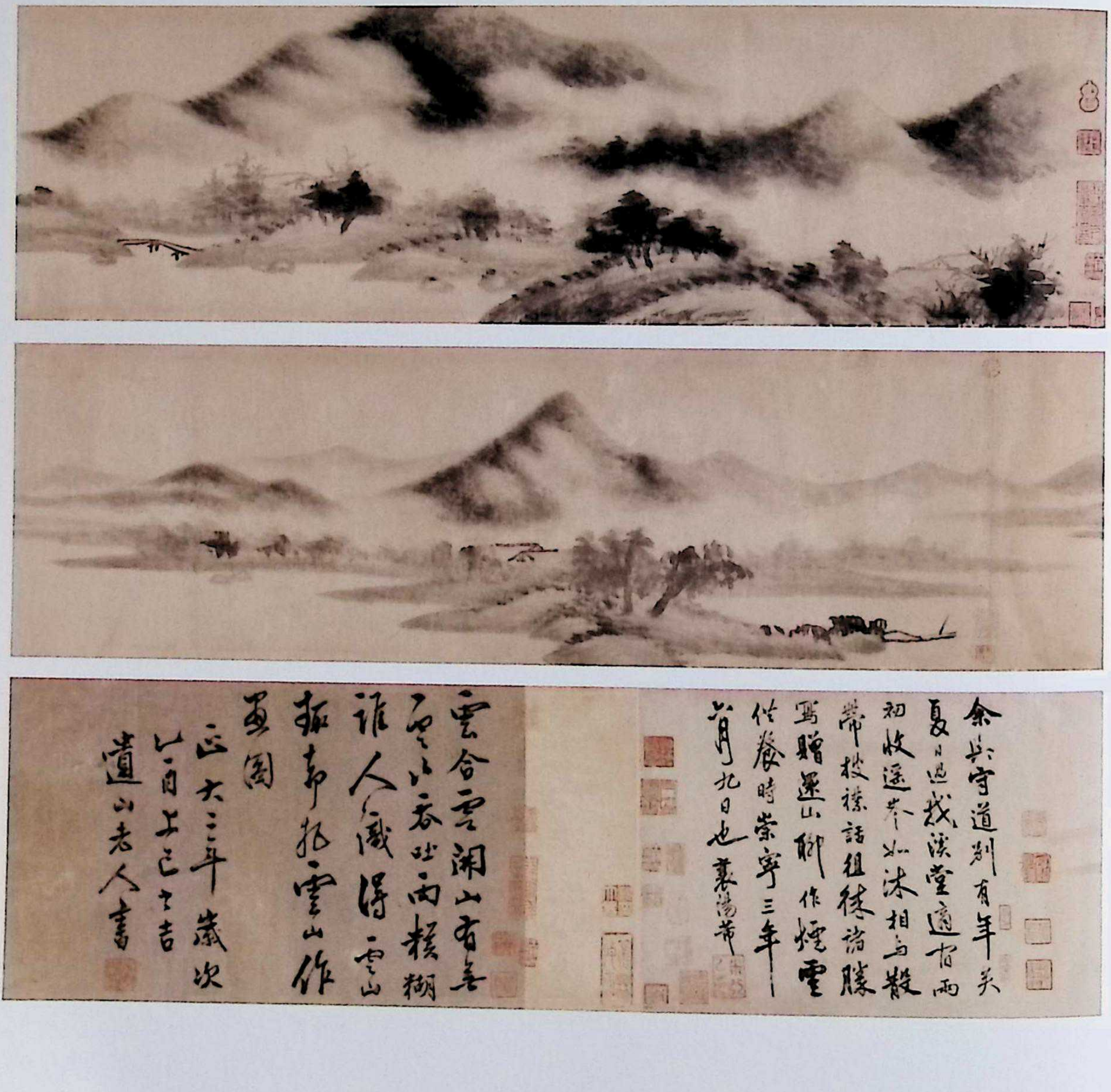
water, this painting implies the existence of it by drawing a school of freely swimming fish and swaying water grasses.

In specific brushwork, the painter employed both elaborate-style and boneless painting techniques with light colors. This painting style had significant influence on fish paintings of later periods down to the Ming Dynasty when similar patterns could still been seen.

It is worth noting that the silk tapestry-wrapped head of this scroll suggests, judging by patterns and silk texture, this painting does date back to the Song Dynasty. Seen from the stamps affixed by collectors or connoisseurs, it was once collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Ming Dynasty, then held by Liang Qingbiao, the Qing court under the reign of Emperor Qianlong, and Yixin, Prince Gong of the Qing Dynasty around mid-1850s. In the early 20th century, this scroll was bought by William Bickers from Zaifeng, Prince Chun, and in 1926 collected in the Saint Louis Art Museum.

Mountains and Water

Northern Song Dynasty
Mi Fu
Ink on Paper
24.1 × 237.5 cm
Collected in the Yale University Art Gallery



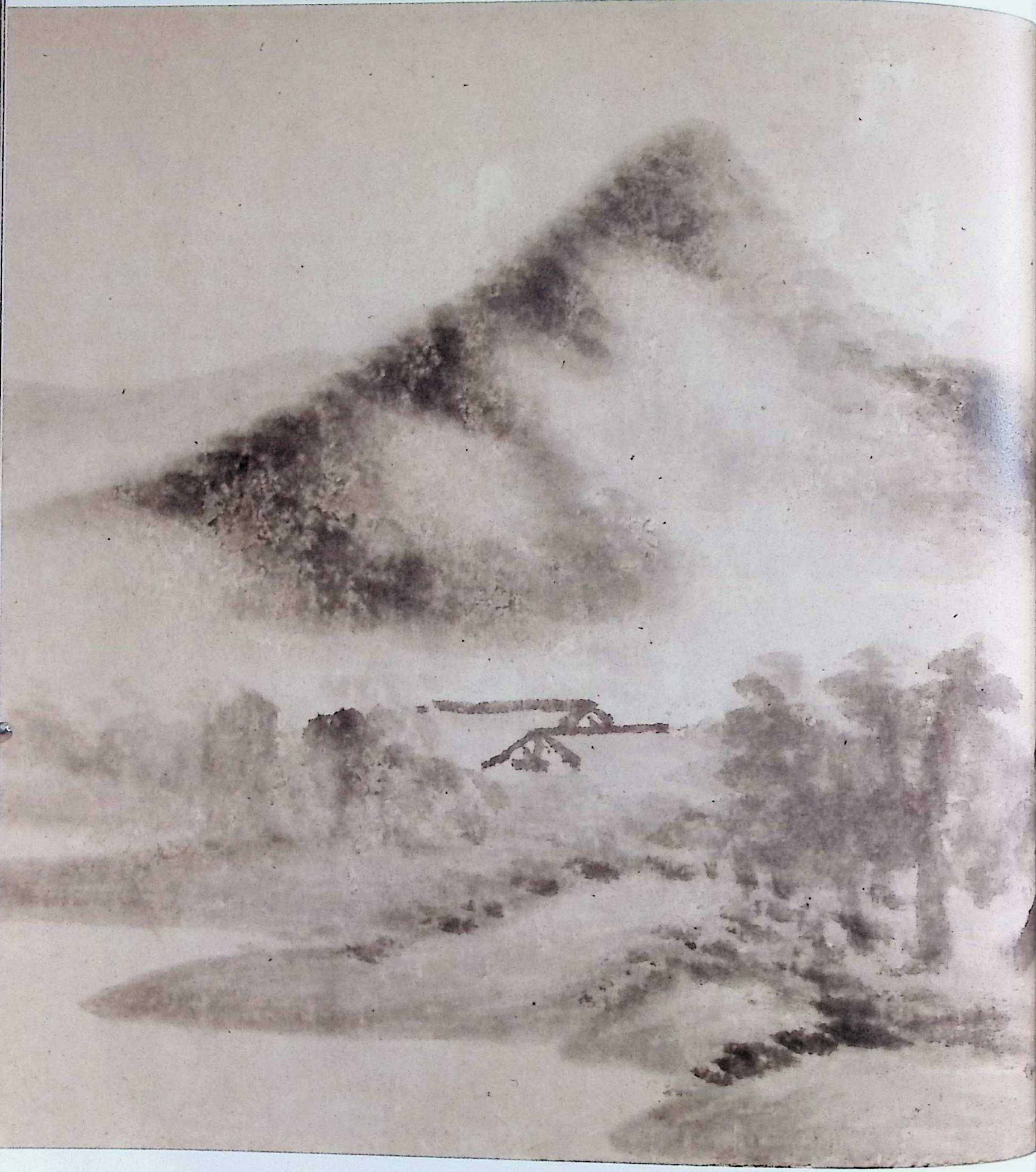
余與守道別有年矣
夏日過我溪堂適甘雨
初收遠岑如沐相與散
帶披襟話組緒諸滕
寫贈還山聊作煙雲
供養時崇寧三年
八月九日也襄陽芾

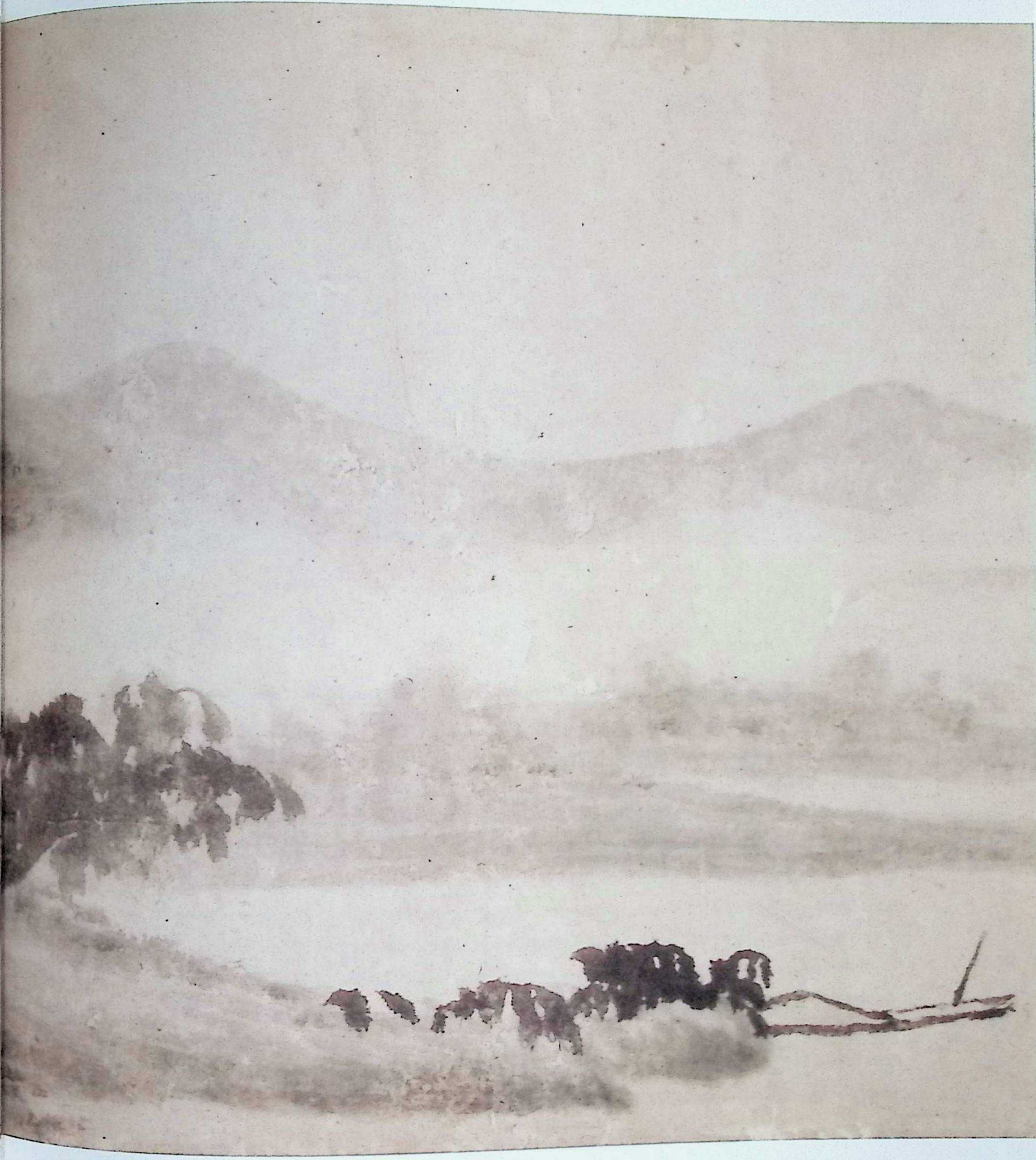
雲合雲開山有無
空山春好雨模糊
誰人識得雲山
振帋揮雲山作
畫圖
正大三年歲次
三月上巳之吉
遺山老人書

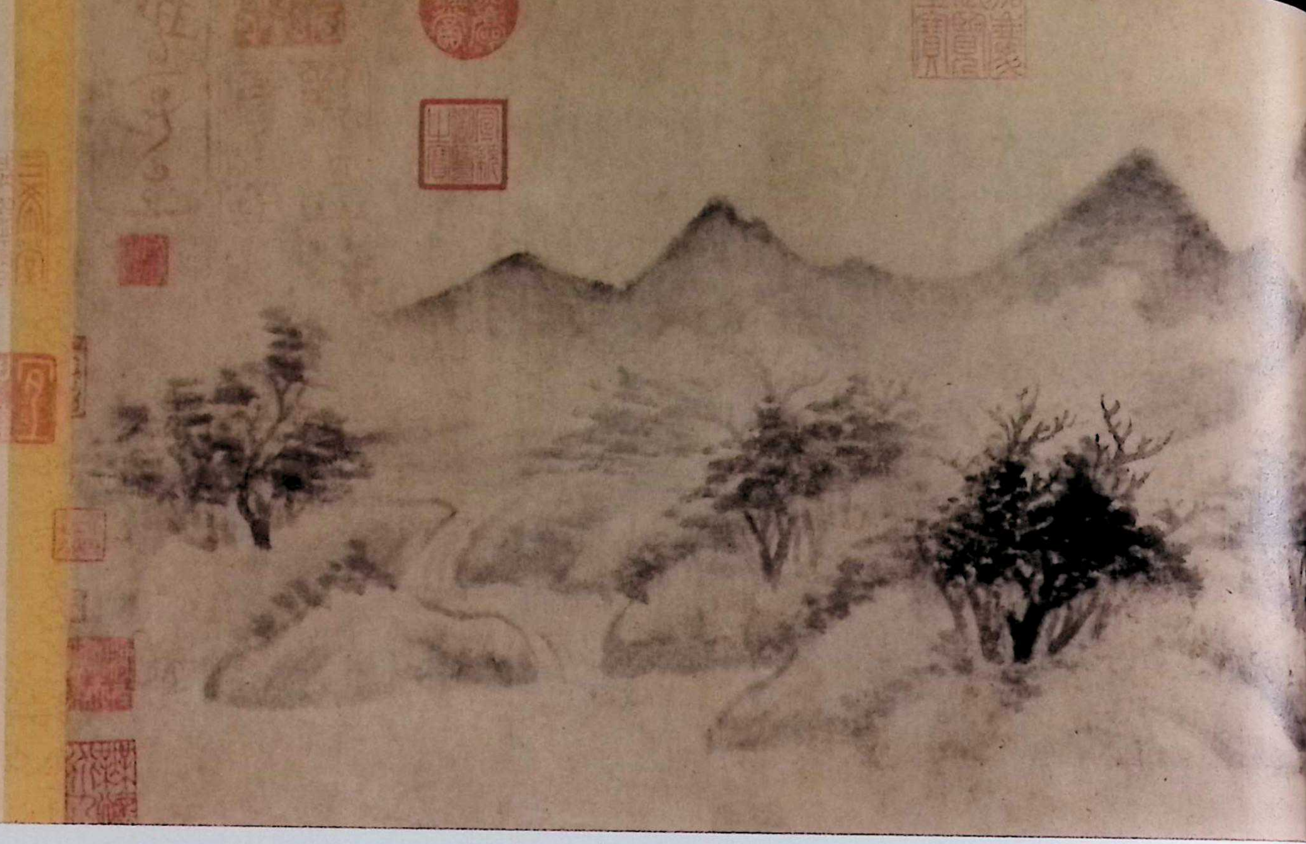
This *Mountains and Water* is attributed to Mi Fu (1051-1107) due to the painter's own inscriptions at the end of the scroll. Mi Fu's painting concepts contributed to theories on early literati painting. Mi is also an important practitioner of literati painting himself. Together with his son Mi Youren, Mi Fu created "ink play" landscape "scribbled with bits and drops of misty clouds" as a technique to portray landscape clouded in mists or rain along the reaches south of the Yangtze River. Later generations commented that landscape painting "changed greatly since the Mi's, with meaning outweighing form."

This 200cm-plus hand scroll portrays undulating mountain ranges shrouded in mists and clouded trees on riversides and sand bars down the foothills. The painter only focused on capturing the conception instead of the portrayal of details. Mi Fu personally revealed that he was inspired by landscapes painted by Dong Yuan, and on this basis created such cloudy mountains. As recorded by Shen Kuo, Dong's paintings are characterized by "a painting does not make any sense if examined at close-up, but vivid and appealing from a distance." This painting does show this characteristic. If you look at it close, you would only see the strokes and could hardly identify any objects; but if you glance it from a distance, you could perceive the unique style of landscape of the south.

There are postscripts written by Yuan Haowen and Yang Weizhen among others at the end of scroll. It was once in the hands of Liang Qingbiao, Duan Fang in the late Qing Dynasty, F.S. Kwen (Guan Fuchu) who had close ties with C.T. Loo, and was included in the *Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient and Genuine Chinese Paintings*, a descriptive, commercial catalogue of paintings and calligraphy. The target audience of this catalogue were deep-pocketed collectors of Chinese artworks in the U.S. back then. This scroll was purchased by Mrs. William H. Moore overseas and later donated to the Yale University Art Gallery in 1953.

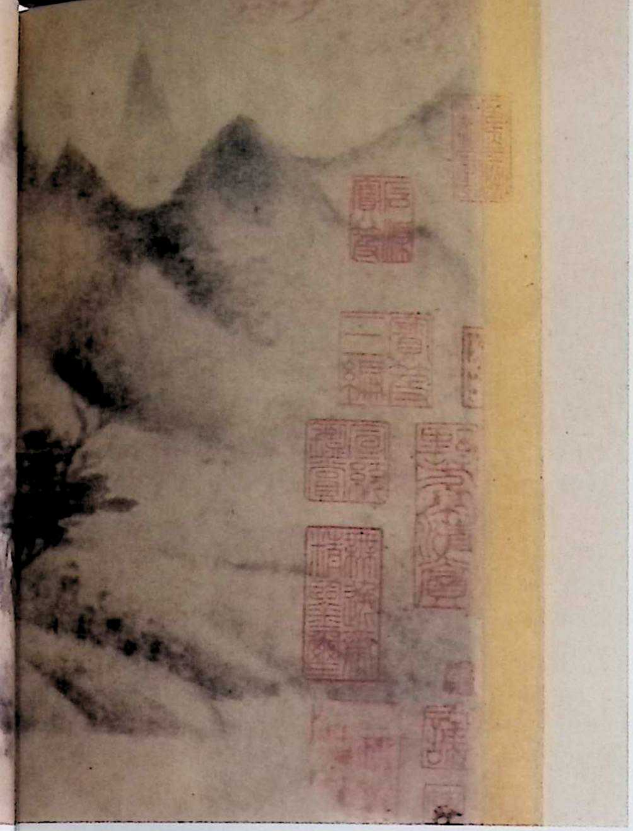






Mi Fu and Mi Youren (1074-1153), father and son, created the "Mi's cloudy mountains", a famous style in Chinese landscape painting that has far-reaching impacts on later generations. According to Mi Fu's own account, this style of painting cloudy landscape characteristic of the reaches south of the Yangtze was inspired by the "plain and innocent" paintings of Dong Yuan and Ju Ran schools. Though Mi Fu contributed a lot to painting theories, there are limited credible works of art now extant. As a result, it is impossible to know the extent to which his painting practice reached. We can only look at the paintings of Mi Youren, his eldest son and heir, to find out.

After the Northern Song Dynasty fell apart, Mi Youren went southward along with the Song Dynasty where he was much respected by Emperor Gaozong. He finally established the "Mi's cloudy mountains" style. As shown in this painting, the painter first drew the contour and layers of mountains with light ink, then finished the direction and volume with dark or light ink spots, plus foothills half hidden in the mists. The tree trunks are boneless, and the branches and leaves are horizontal ink blots. These

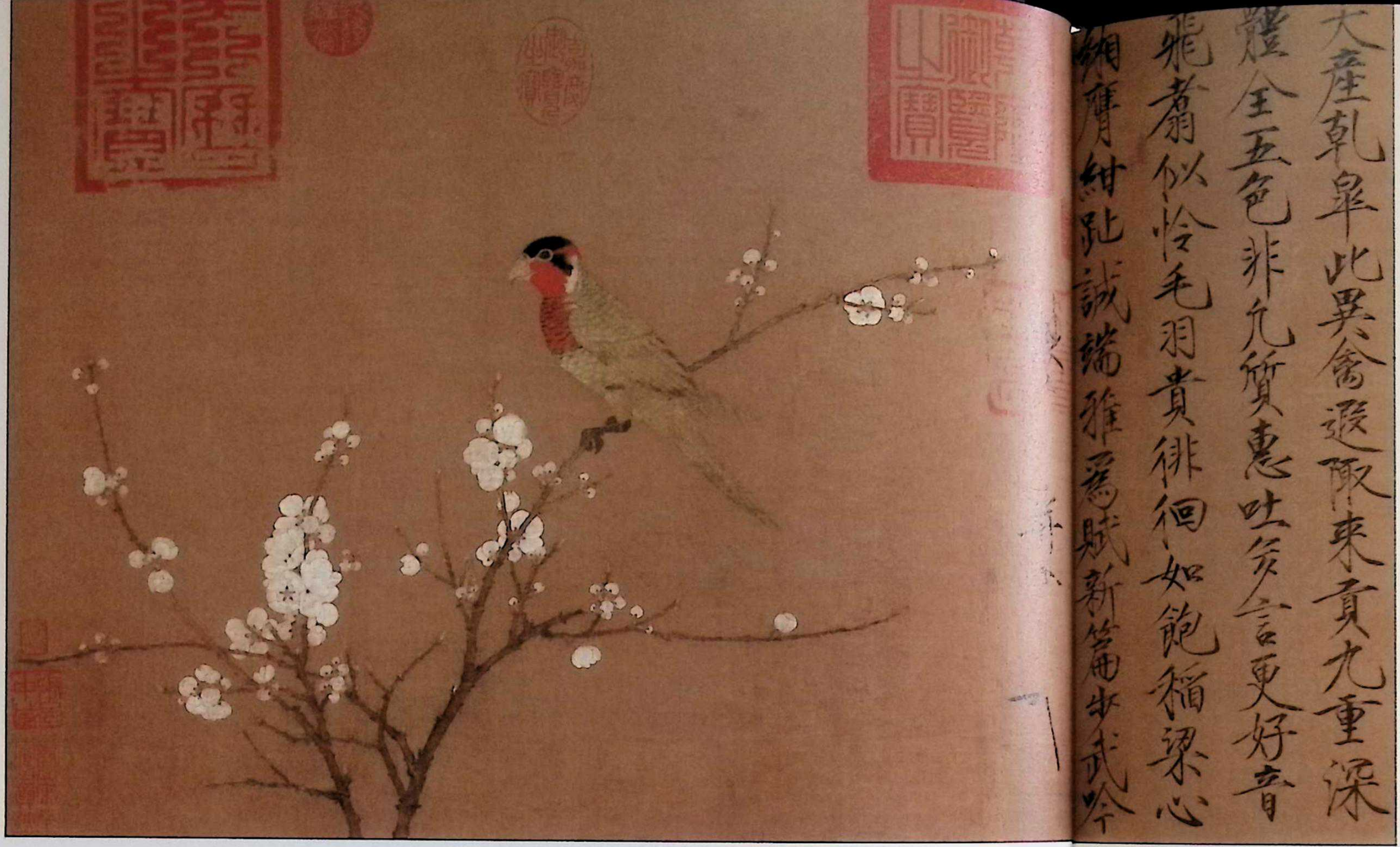


Cloudy Mountains

Northern Song Dynasty
Mi Youren
Ink on Paper
27.6 × 57 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

unique ink blots portraying mountains and leaves were called "falling eggplant blots" by later generations, representative of Mi's landscape paintings. This style generally ignores texturing and brushing, instead only applies dotting and shading to create cloudy, misty effects. This approach is in stark contrast with that of Li and Guo schools, the mainstream of landscape painting in the Northern Song Dynasty. Mi Youren called this "ink play" landscape "scribbled with bits and drops of misty clouds", which undoubtedly manifests the taste of literati. This style was inherited and developed by later generations.

This scroll has no inscription, only postscripts by Xian Yushu and others at the end. Seen from stamps of collectors, it was once in the hands of Liang Qingbiao, and later collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty. In addition, this painting has the title "Authentic Cloudy Mountains by Mi Yuanhui (Mi Youren) of the Song Dynasty" written by Wu Hufan and a collection stamp affixed by Xu Bangda. In 1973, the Metropolitan Museum of Art purchased this painting from Wang Jiqian.


天産乾皐此異禽遐陬來貢九重深
體全五色非凡質惠吐多言更好音
飛翥似怜毛羽貴徘徊如飽稻粱心
緗膺紺趾誠端雅爲賦新篇步武吟

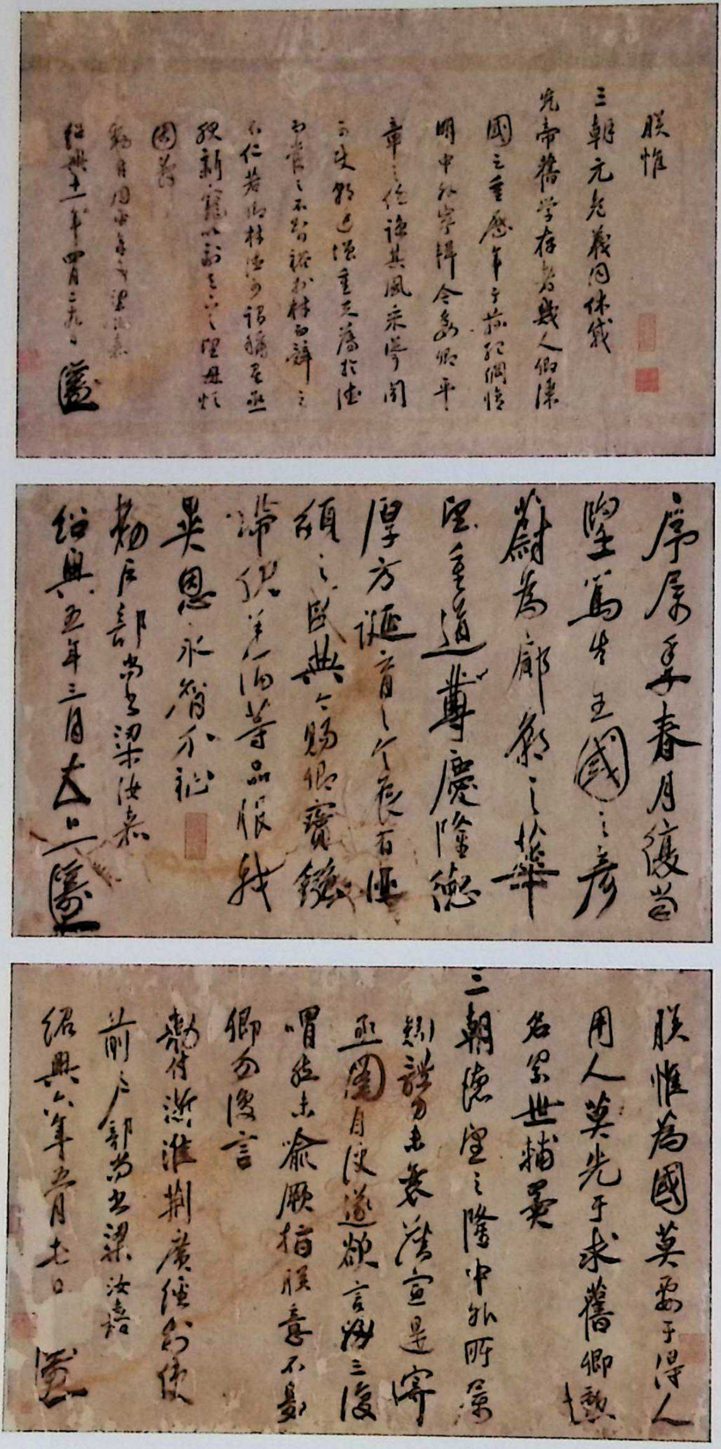
Five-colored Parakeet on a Blossoming Apricot Tree
Northern Song Dynasty
Zhao Ji
Ink and Color on Silk
53.3 × 125.1cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Zhao Ji (1082-1135), Emperor Huizong, was politically incompetent and an unsuccessful ruler, but he was a generally recognized artist with extraordinary achievements. Obsessed with arts, he led the Imperial Painting Academy which pooled together talented painters from across the country and created the pinnacle of Chinese palace painting.

Zhao Ji was an excellent painter in his own right. This *Five-colored Parakeet on a Blossoming Apricot Tree* is traditionally attributed to him as there are a poetic preface in Slender Gold, an iconic script of Zhao on the right side of the canvas, and the "painted and written by the Emperor" inscriptions and the signature "Son of Heaven" (damaged). However, most of scholars today do not think it is a piece of work by Zhao Ji, instead by a painter of the Imperial Painting Academy.

With exquisite brushwork and colors, this painting portrays a multicolored parrot perching on a blossoming apricot tree. Such an elegant and exquisite style is typical of flower-and-bird paintings of the Northern Song Dynasty which peaked under the reign of Emperor Huizong. This painting is similar with the *Auspicious Dragon Rock* collected in the Palace Museum and the *Auspicious Cranes* collected in the Liaoning Provincial Museum in both size and form. Therefore, some scholars speculate that these three pieces of work were originally part of the *Imperial Review Collection of the Xuanhe Era*, a collection of painting albums, but later remounted into hand scrolls. According to literature, the *Imperial Review Collection of the Xuanhe Era*, in one thousand 15K-sized albums, include paintings on a diversity of rare or exotic flowers and auspicious animals personally selected by Emperor Huizong. Such a huge collection of creations could not be done by one person, so many are supposed to be ghosted by academy painters.

According to collection stamps, this scroll was once collected by imperial storehouses of the Song and Yuan dynasties, later in the hands of Dai Mingyue, Song Luo and other people, then collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty, and later given to Yixin, Prince Gong as a gift. In the wake of the Revolution of 1911, it was sold by Puwei and Puru, grandsons of Yixin, to an antique dealer, and in 1925 purchased at Liulichang by Zhang Yunzhong who wrote several postscripts to explain how it was passed down. Later, this painting was brought to Japan where it was purchased by Teijiro Yamamoto and soon resold to Sadajiro Yamanaka and Yamanaka and Co., an antique dealer. In 1933, Sadajiro Yamanaka sold it to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston at a price of US$ 11,000.



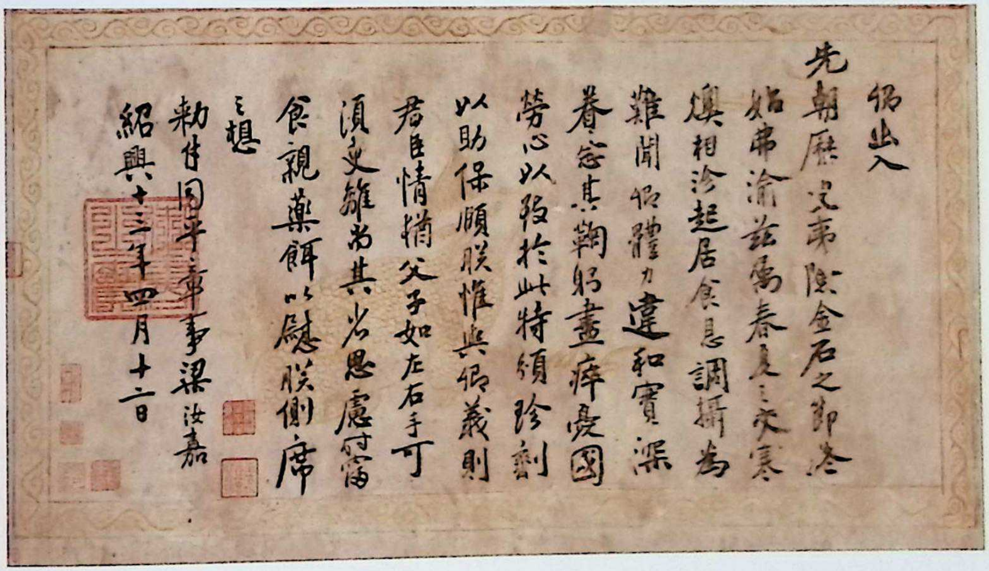
Imperial Decrees to Liang Rujia

Southern Song Dynasty
Zhao Gou
Ink on Paper
Entire scroll: 36.2 × 235.3 cm
Single pieces:
36.2 × 56.7 cm
36.2 × 58 cm
36.2 × 60 cm
36.2 × 60 cm
Collected in the Tokyo National Museum

This long scroll mounts together four imperial decrees personally written by Emperor Gaozong which seen from the inscriptions, were respectively written in the 5th year (1135), 6th year (1136), 11th year (1141), and 13th year (1143) of the Shaoxing reign. Zhao Gou (1107-1187), Emperor Gaozong of the Song Dynasty, the ninth son of Emperor Huizong, ascended the throne after the Song Dynasty migrated south. Though politically inept in the eyes of later historians, just like his father, Zhao Gou was artistically talented. He was a skilled calligrapher good at standard, running, and cursive scripts. According to literature, he "originally imitated Mi Fu, later blended the styles of the Six Dynasties (222–589, it usually refers to the six dynasties of southern ancient China from the Three Kingdoms to the Sui Dynasty) and established his own style." All these four imperial decrees were issued to Liang Rujia, a renowned official of the Southern Song Dynasty whose highest-ranking position was Minster of Revenue. According to the *History of the Song Dynasty,* Liang was "good at managing officials, with remarkable performance in Lin'an." These imperial decrees are mostly words of praise and comfort, even about rewarding clothes, food, and medicine, fully reflecting close emperor-subject relationship.

This scroll has postscripts written by several collector-connoisseurs of the Qing Dynasty including Zhang Yuesong, Yang Zhenlin, Xie Lansheng, and Wu Rongguang who all lavished praises on it and considered it authentic. However, Xu Bangda, a more recent connoisseur, based on his analysis in terms of brushwork, paper used and text, concluded that it was falsely attributed to Emperor Gaozong, instead very likely written by Zhu Yunming.

As shown by collector stamps, this scroll was once in the hands of Pan Zhengwei and Wu Yuanhui among others, and ended up in Japan.


卿出入
先朝歷更事陳金石之節終
始弗渝茲屬春夏之交寒
燠相沴起居食息調攝為
難聞卿體力違和實深
眷念其鞠躬盡瘁憂國
勞心以致於此特頒珍劑
以助保順朕惟與卿義則
君臣情猶父子如左右手可
須臾離者其必思慮所當
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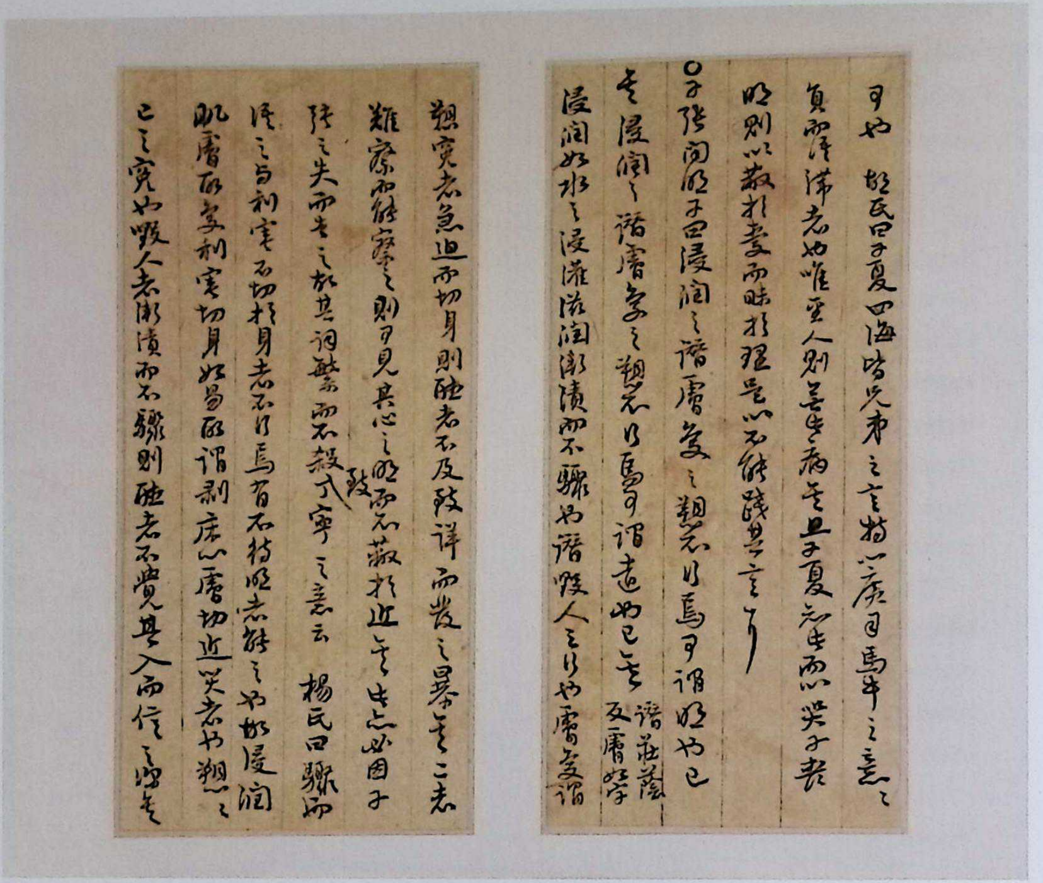
勅付同平章事梁汝嘉
紹興十三年四月十二日



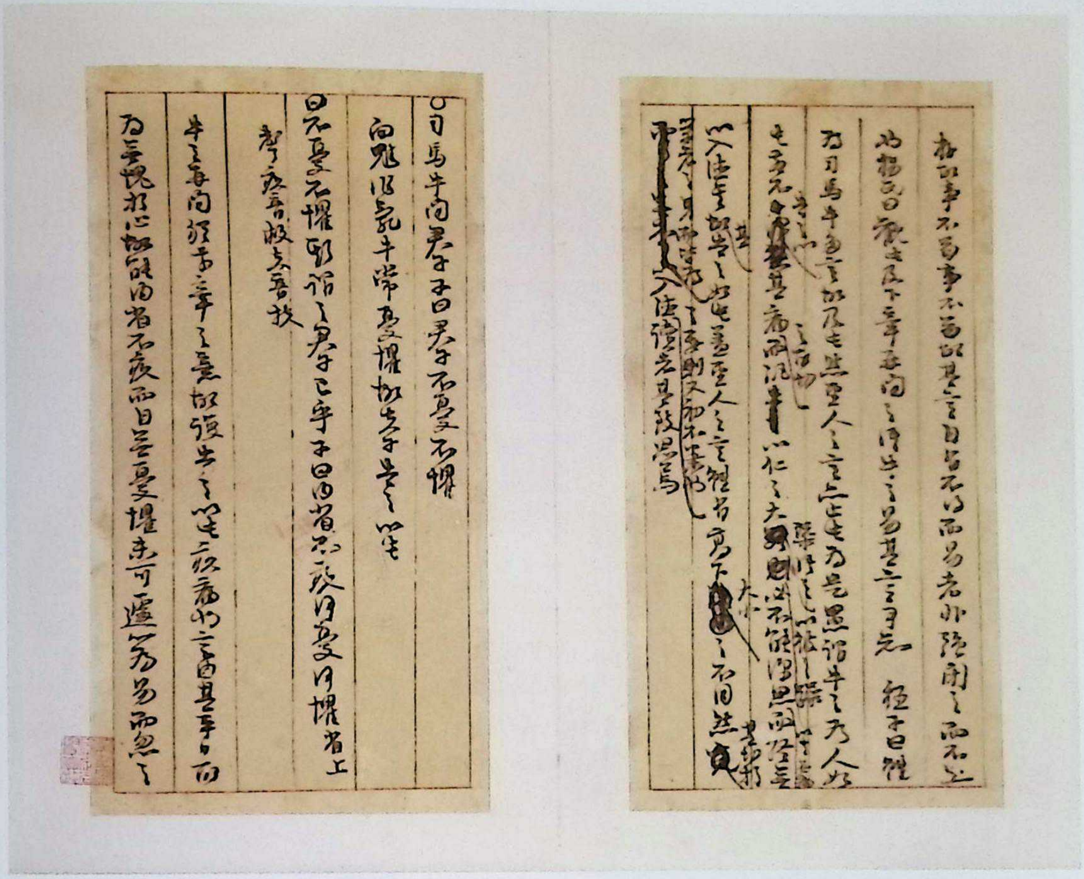
可也　胡氏曰子夏四海皆兄弟之言特以廣司馬牛之意〻圓而語滯者也唯聖人則無此病矣且子夏知此而以哭子喪明則以蔽於愛而昧於理是以不能踐其言爾

○子張問明子曰浸潤之譖膚受之愬不行焉可謂明也已矣浸潤之譖膚受之愬不行焉可謂遠也已矣（譖莊蔭反[illegible]）浸潤如水之浸灌滋潤漸漬而不驟也譖毀人之行也膚受謂

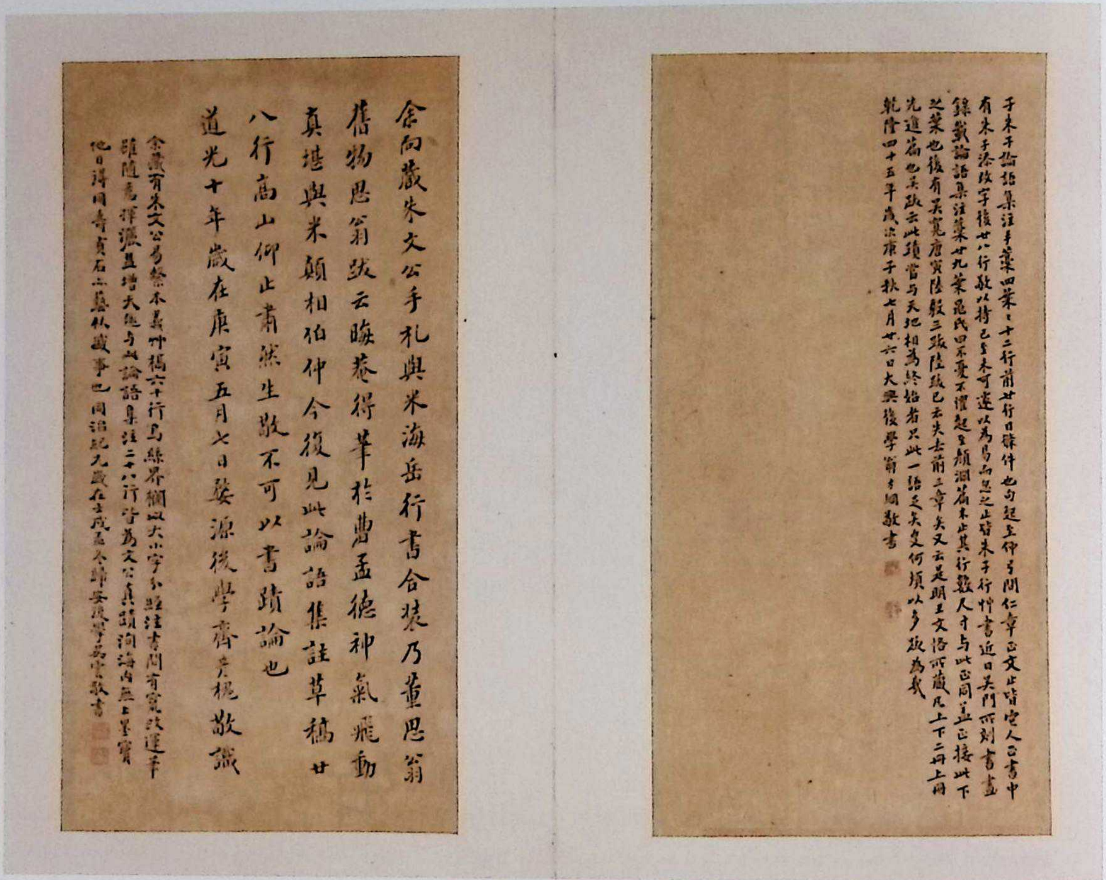
愬冤者急迫而切身則聽者不及致詳而發之暴矣二者難察而能察之則可見其心之明而不蔽於近矣此亦必因子張之失而告之故其詞繁而不殺以致丁寧之意云　楊氏曰驟而語之與利害不切於身者不行焉有不待明者能之也故浸潤肌膚所受利害切身如易所謂剝床以膚切近災者也愬〻己之冤也毀人者漸漬而不驟則聽者不覺其入而信之深矣

Incomplete Manuscript of Commentaries on the Analects of Confucius

Southern Song Dynasty
Zhu Xi
Ink on Paper
27.6 × 14.2 cm, 37 pieces
Collected in the Kyoto National Museum



Zhu Xi (1130-1200), a famous exponent of Confucianism in the Song Dynasty, was a prolific writer whose *Variorum of the Four Books* was touted as the "ladder to the Six Classics (*the Book of Songs, the Book of History, the Book of Rites, the Book of Changes, the Book of Music* and *the Spring and Autumn Annals*)" and was officially made a textbook for the imperial examination, exerting huge impacts on scholars down the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. In addition to academic achievements, Zhu was also an outstanding calligrapher. The *Highlights of Chinese Calligraphy History*, by Tao Zongyi of the Ming Dynasty, records that Zhu Xi "carried on the orthodoxy to the extent of sage, and excelled in the art of brush and ink, particularly big characters in running or cursive scripts. His strokes appear composed and elegant. Even a tiny piece is craved by collectors." Unfortunately, very few of his calligraphic works survived, so this manuscript is especially precious.



子朱子論語集注手藁四葉々十二行前廿行日雍件也句起至仲弓問仁章正文止皆它人正書中有朱子塗改字後廿八行敬以持己至未可遽以為易而忽之止皆朱子行艸書近日吳門所刻書畫錄載論語集注藁廿九葉晁氏曰不憂不懼起至顏淵篇末止其行數大小与此正同蓋正接此下之葉也後有吳寬唐寅陸穀三跋陸跋已云失去前三章矣又云是明王文恪所藏凡上下二册上册先進篇也吳跋云此須當与天地相為終始者只此一語足矣更何須以多跋為哉

乾隆四十五年歲次庚子秋七月廿六日大興後學翁方綱敬書

余向藏朱文公手札與米海岳行書合裝乃董思翁舊物思翁跋云臨卷得華於曹孟德神氣飛動真堪與米顛相伯仲今復見此論語集註草稿廿八行高山仰止肅然生敬不可以書蹟論也

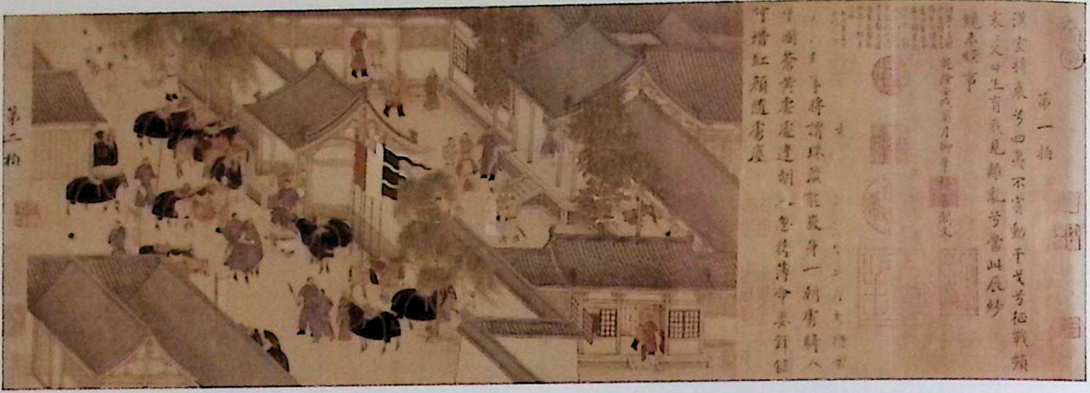
道光十年歲在庚寅五月七日婺源後學齊彥槐敬識

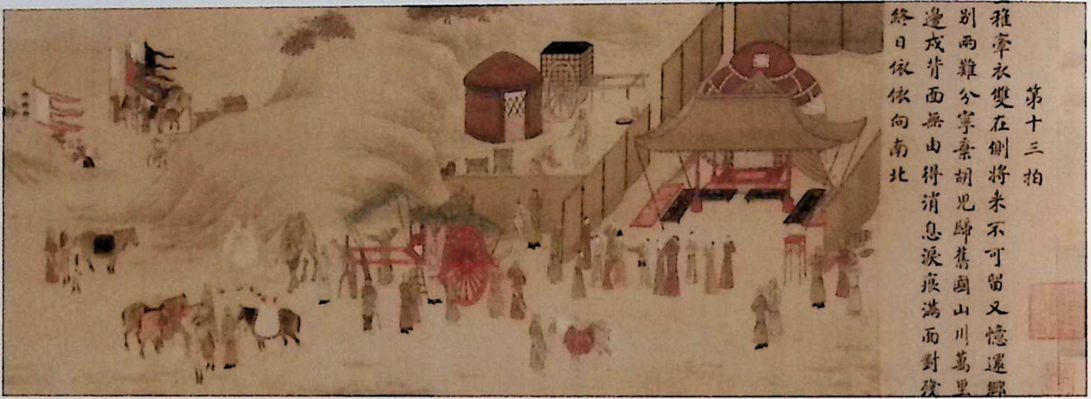
余藏有朱文公易繫本義艸稿六十行烏絲界欄以大小字分疏注者間有寬收運筆頗隨意揮灑且增大與今此論語集注二十八行皆為文公真蹟洵海內無上墨寶他日得同壽貞石亦藝林盛事也　同治紀元歲在壬戌嘉平歸安後學吳雲敬書

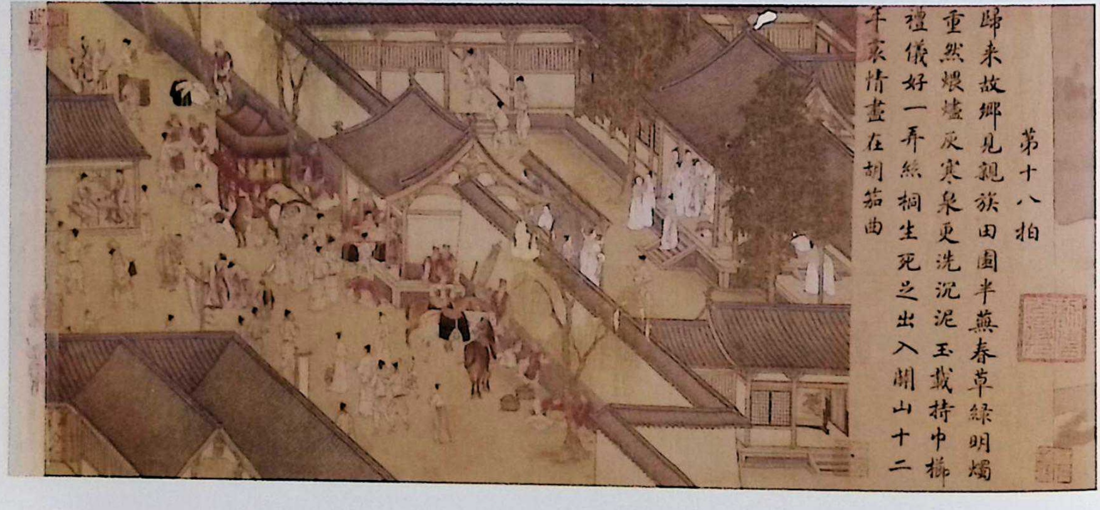
This *Incomplete Manuscript of Commentaries on the Analects of Confucius* has 37 pages each containing six lines (except for two lines on the last page), adding up to 218 lines. The text is an incomplete part of the "Yan Yuan" section. This manuscript is valuable literature-wise and artistically. This extant manuscript is in two volumes. One volume, with eight pages, has postscripts written by Weng Fanggang, Qi Yanhuai, and Wu Yun at the beginning and a small portrait of Zhu Xi at the end added by a later scholar. The other volume, with 29 pages, has the title "Incomplete Manuscript of Commentaries on the Analects of Confucius by Zhu Xi" written by Sun Shilin at the beginning and reviews by Kang Youwei and Shen Zengzhi among others at the end.

A photocopy of this manuscript was published by the Commercial Press in the 7th year of the Republic of China (1918), titled *Manuscript of Commentaries on the Analects of Confucius by Zhu Xi*, with postscripts by Tang Yin and Wu Kuan back then (lost today), suggesting that it was then in China and only later ended up in Japan.

In addition, there are two manuscripts by Zhu Xi now extant, i.e., the 60-line *Great Treatise on the Book of Change: Denotation*, currently collected in the Palace Museum, Beijing and the 1,200-character *Frequently Asked Questions about The Great Learning: Good Faith*, currently collected in the Liaoning Provincial Museum. These three manuscripts are important literature for studying the scholarship and calligraphy of Zhu Xi.


第一拍
漢室將衰兮四夷不賓動干戈兮征戰頻
哀哀父母生育我見離亂兮當此辰紗
鏡未經事
何惜紅顏隨虜塵
第二拍


第十三拍
稚牽衣雙在側將来不可留又憶還鄉
别兩難分寧棄胡兒歸舊國山川萬里
邊戍背面無由得消息淚痕滿面對殘
終日依依向南北


第十八拍
歸来故鄉見親族田園半蕪春草綠明燭
重然煨燼灰寒泉更洗沉泥玉載持巾櫛
禮儀好一弄絲桐生死之出入關山十二
年哀情盡在胡笳曲

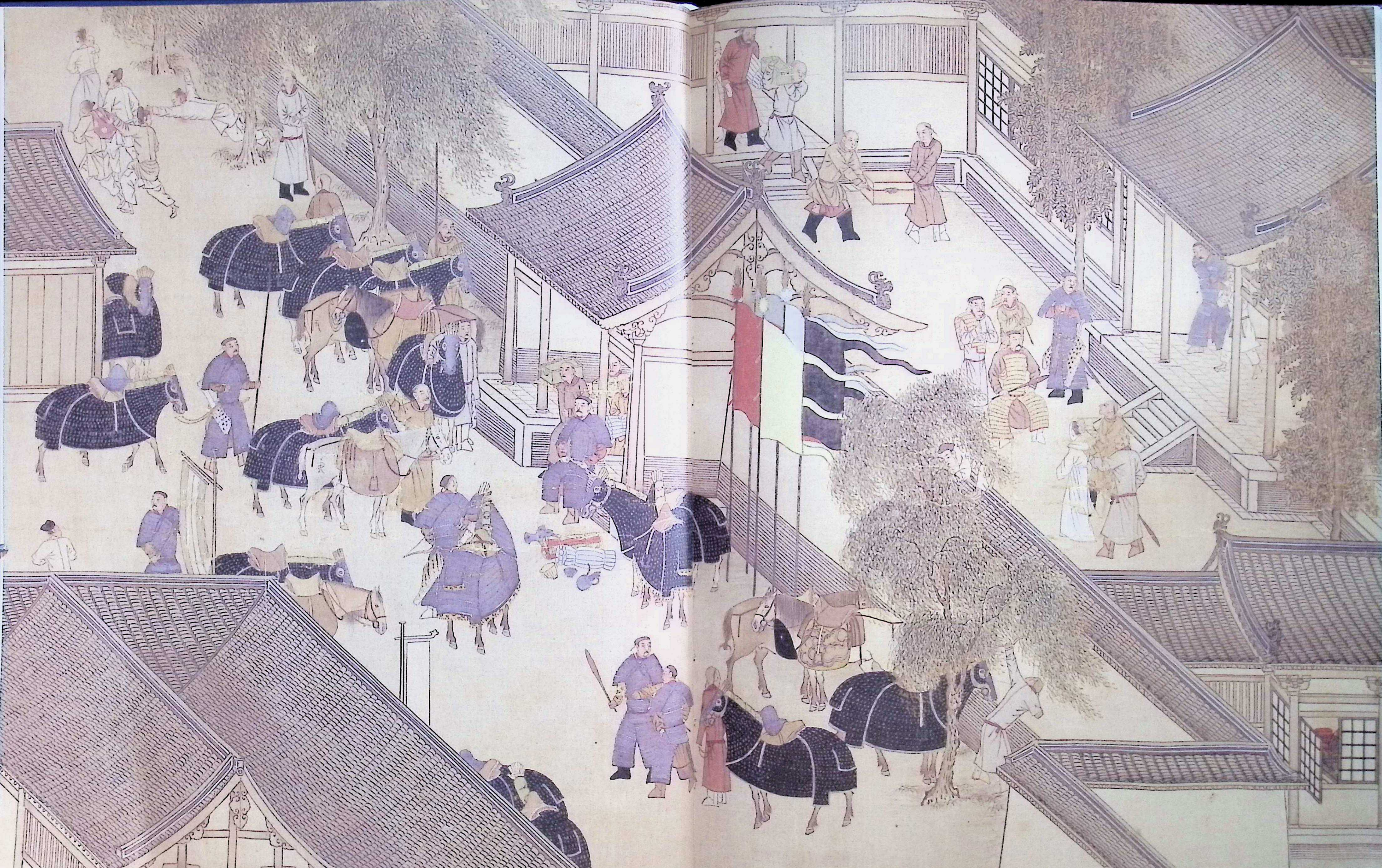
Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute

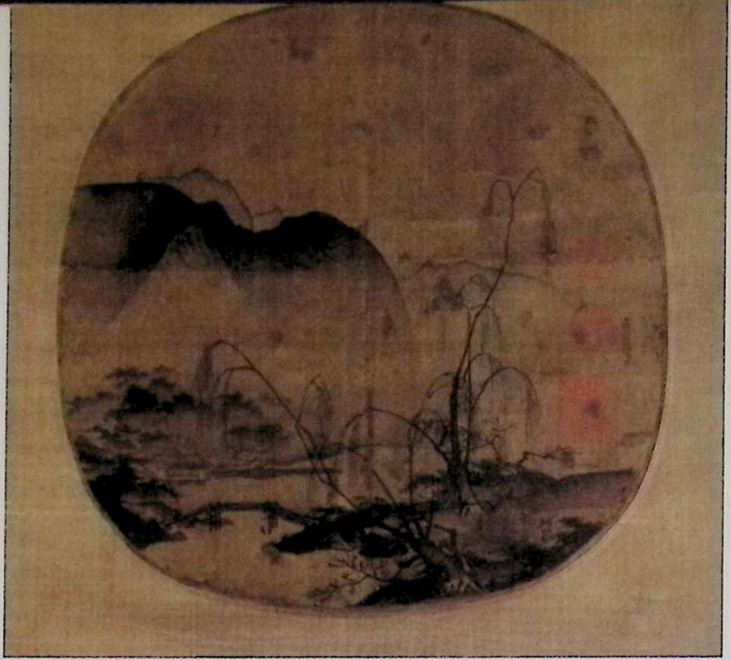
Southern Song Dynasty (Ming Dynasty copy)
Artist Unknown
Ink and Color on Silk
29.2 × 1544.5 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

The historical story of "Cai Wenji returned to the Han" went into the realm of painting in about the Southern Song Dynasty. Since then, it frequently appeared in paintings. There are many works of art extant on this subject, with narrative long scrolls based on the *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* by Liu Shang of the Tang Dynasty being an integral part. In addition to this scroll, there are eight other versions of the *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* collected in museums across the world. These paintings relate to and even coincide with each other, suggesting their close and complicated relationships. This scroll and the *Lady Wenji Returned to the Han Dynasty* collected in the Museum Yamato Bunkakan are most complete among these scrolls, while the one collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Tang Dynasty copy collected in the Taipei Palace Museum are among the earliest versions.

This scroll contains 18 scenes each accompanied by an excerpt from the *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* by Li Shang in regular script. The combination of picture with text is consistent with many extant paintings of the Song Dynasty, such as the *Female Filial Piety Written by Emperor Gaozong with Matching Paintings by Ma Hezhi* collected in the Taipei Palace Museum. This scroll's strokes appear stiff, and some characters are obviously traced, which indicates that this scroll is not a creation of the Song Dynasty, instead is traced and copied by a calligrapher of the Ming Dynasty based on an earlier master copy. Nevertheless, this scroll still has irreplaceable value in preserving the original state of master copy and the dress code of the Song Dynasty.

Though this scroll is affixed with approximately 100 stamps by collectors, including Jia Sidao and Mu Lin, the most credible stamps among these, according to studies, could only be dated back to Qian Ning and Geng Zhaozhong. Later, this scroll was collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty and much treasured by Emperor Qianlong who even personally completed the missing words in the first chapter. After the fall of the Qing empire, this scroll ended up in the private sector until it was acquired by Wang Jiqian. Finally, it was obtained by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1973.





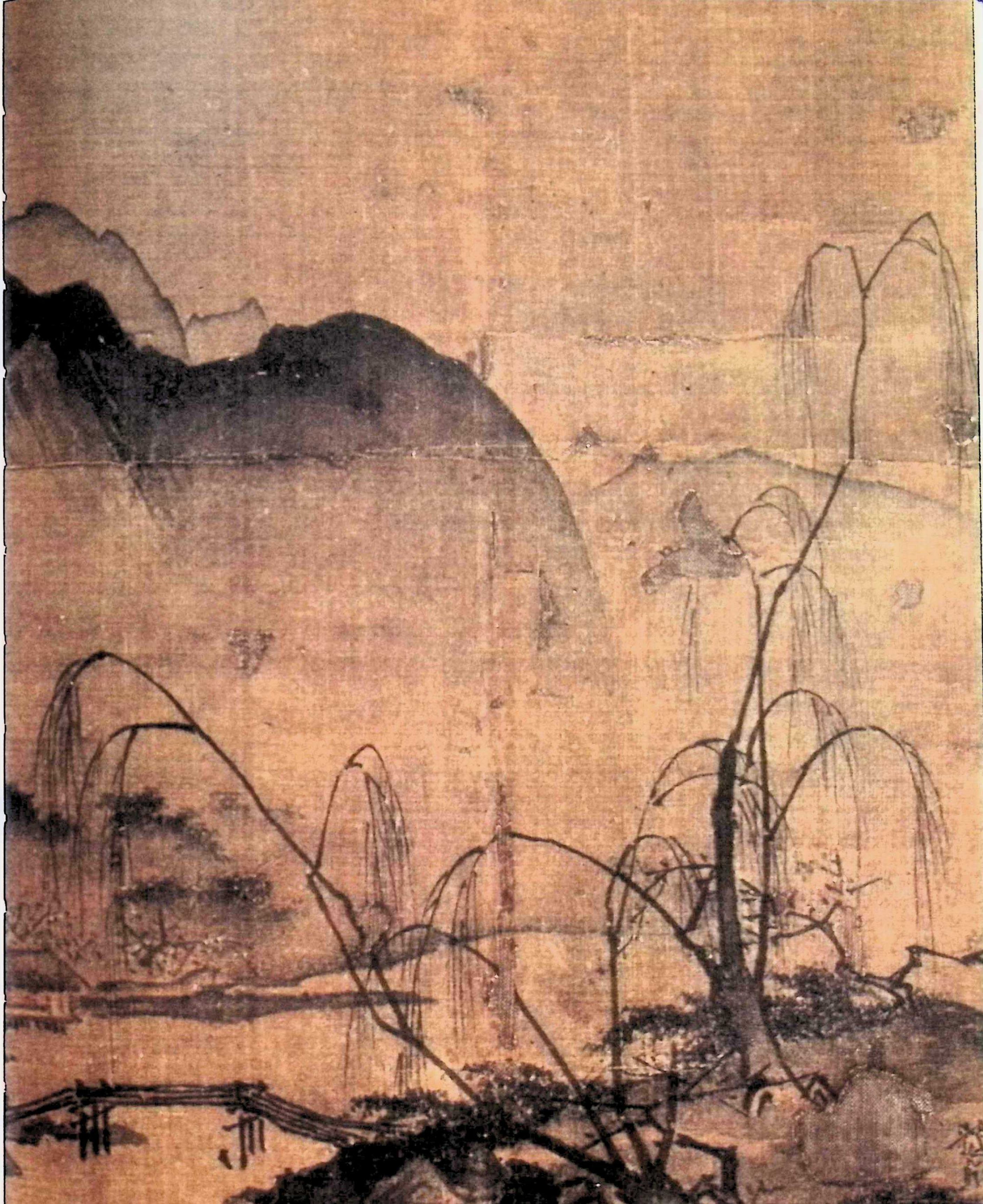
Bare Willows and Distant Mountains

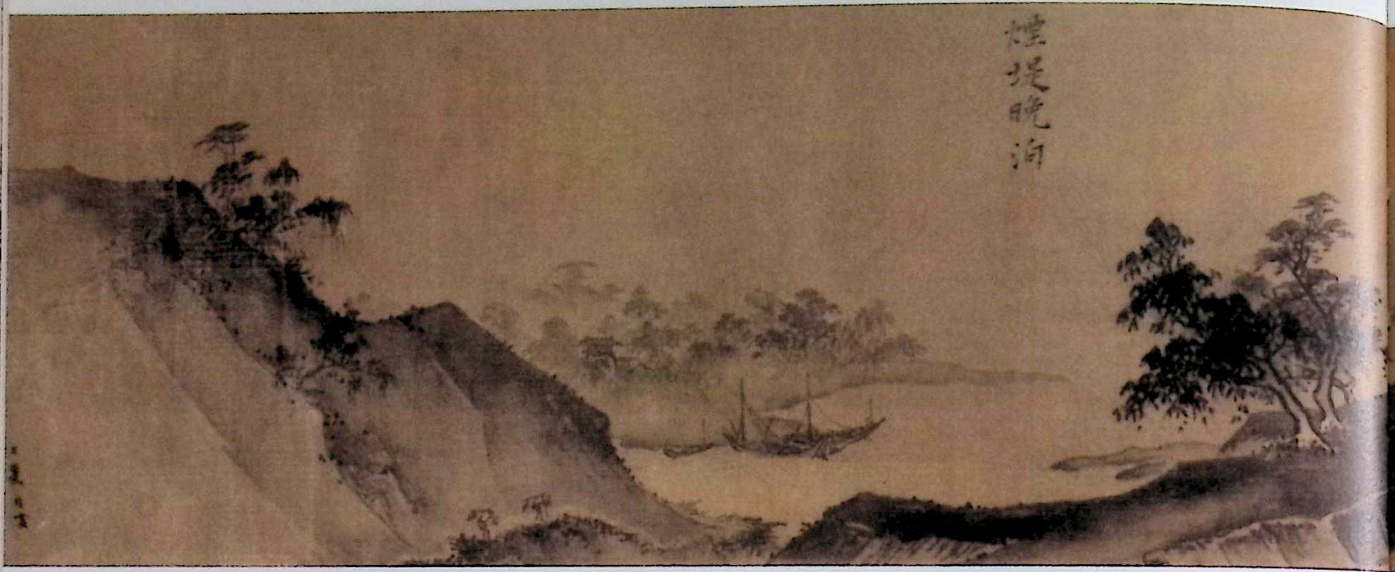
Southern Song Dynasty
Ma Yuan
Ink and Color on Silk
23.8 × 24.2 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

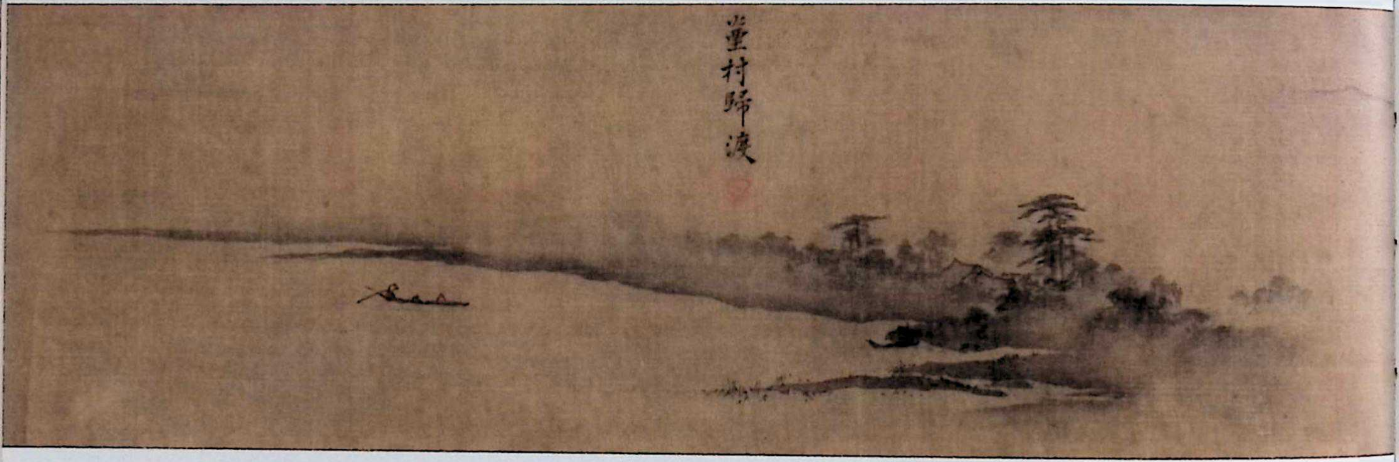
This piece of work, with the signature "Ma Yuan" on the lower right corner, is traditionally believed to be an authentic painting by Ma Yuan (1140-1225). However, due to tear and wear over centuries, the character "Yuan" is largely missing and hardly discernible. Though it is now mounted as an album leaf, seen from the style of painting and prints at the center, it is supposed to be the decorative surface of a functional, hand-held circular fan. Among extant paintings from the Song Dynasty, those painted on circular fans take up a large share, suggesting the popularity of this form of art during that period.

Ma Yuan was a renowned court painter of the Southern Song Dynasty and regarded by later generations as a representative figure of academy painting. This painting has a strong poetic touch commonly seen in paintings of the Southern Song Dynasty. At the foreground are riversides and willows delicately portrayed with thin, forceful strokes, while in the distance are mountains outlined with axe-cut strokes. The contrast of the solid with the void is clever. This painting as a whole is well-structured and layered. The iconic corner-centered composition of Ma Yuan is called "Ma's Corner" which, seen from this piece, is not that obvious. Accordingly, some scholars argue that this painting reflects what Ma's early paintings look like, so it is all the more valuable.

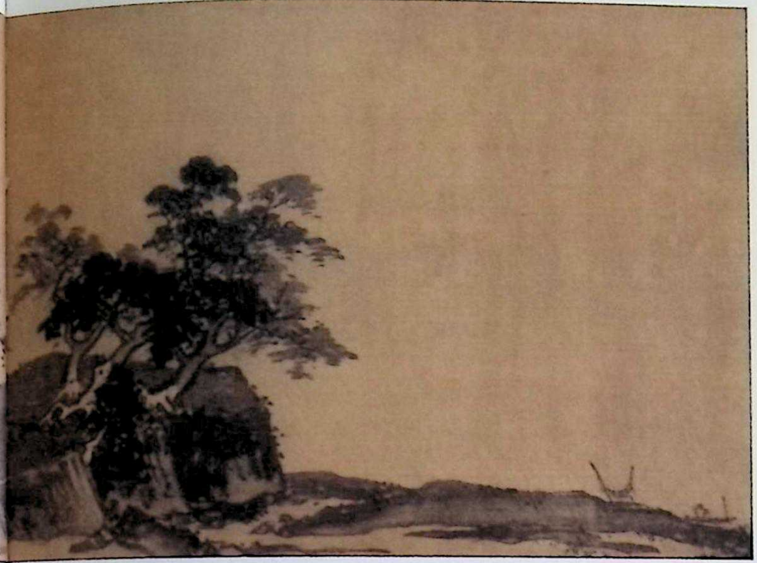
This painting is affixed with three stamps by Xiang Yuanbian, suggesting that it was once in the hands of Xiang. It was purchased in China by Kokichi Hayasaki, nephew of Kakuzō Okakura, then an adviser to the Oriental Art Department, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), and brought to Japan and then the U.S. in 1913, and finally acquired by the MFA in 1914.







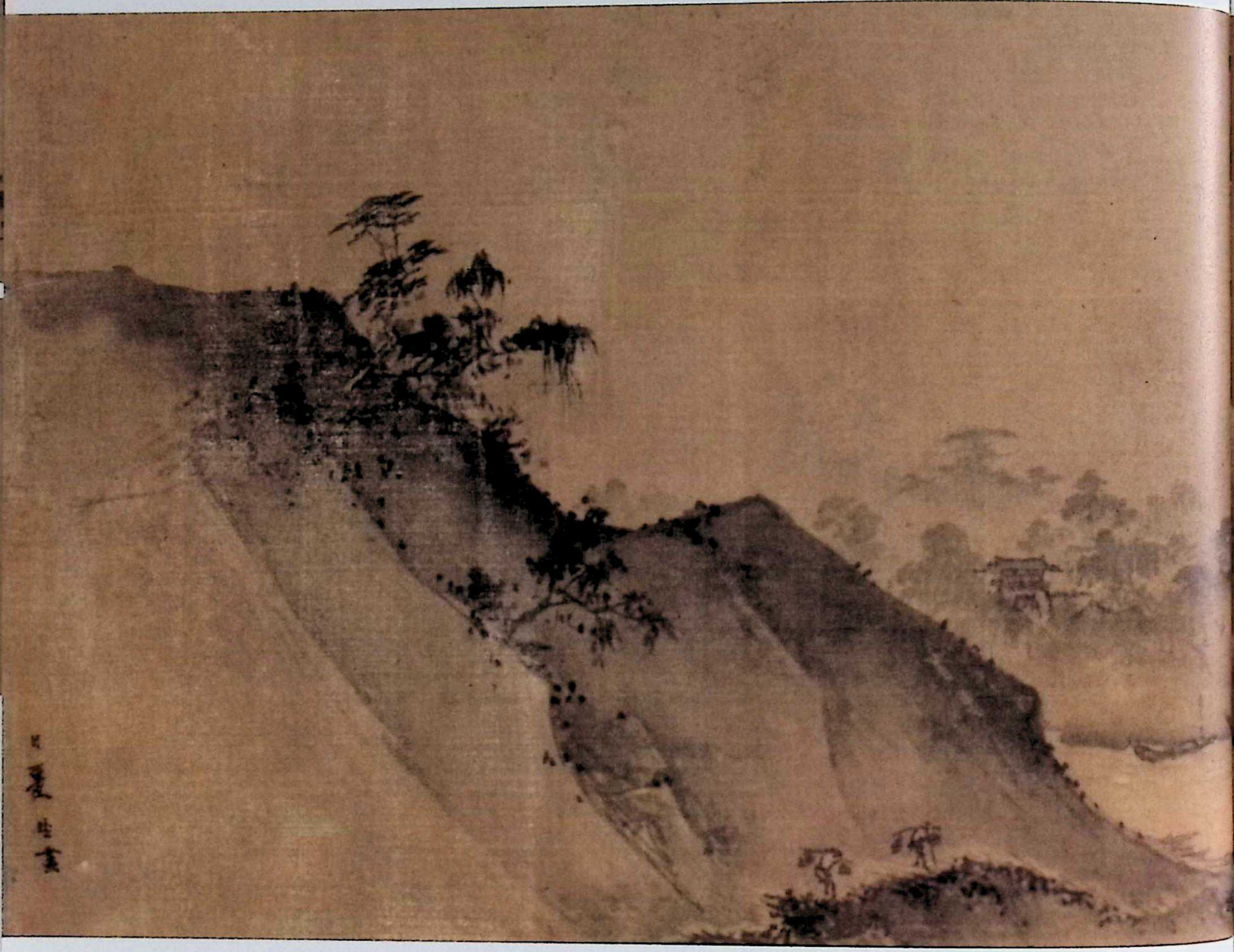
This scroll has "by your humble servant Xia Gui" inscribed at the end. It is generally recognized by scholars as a "standard piece" by Xia Gui (birth and death years unknown), i.e., often as a criterion used in identification. This scroll titled *Twelve Views of Landscape* now has only four views extant, i.e., "Distant Mountains and Wild Geese", "Ferry Returning to the Misty Village", "Fisherman Playing the Flute", and "Anchoring



Twelve Views of Landscape
Southern Song Dynasty
Xia Gui
Ink on Silk
27.31 × 253.68 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

on a Misty Bank at Dusk" respectively according to captions. Gao Shiqi, a collector of the Qing Dynasty, once held a copy of Xia Gui's *Twelve Views of Landscape*. According to his account, in addition to the said four views, there were another eight preceding views, i.e., "Sight-seeing on a River Bank", "Fishing Quietly on a Sand Shoal", "Chimney Smoke Rising above a Sunlit Town", "Overlooking a Clear River", "Fascinating Lush Forest", "Cloudy Temple up the Stairs in Mid-air", "Playing Chess on an Otherworldly Rock", and "Strange Peaks with Stunning Views".

Seen from the scenes, each view stands on its own yet is connected with other views. In the process of painting, the painter focused on the balance of foreground and background. For example, the ninth view "Distant Mountains and Wild Geese" and the tenth view "Ferry Returning to the Misty Village" use mountains cleverly as a bridging device. Judging from the four remaining views, the complete 12-view scroll is supposed to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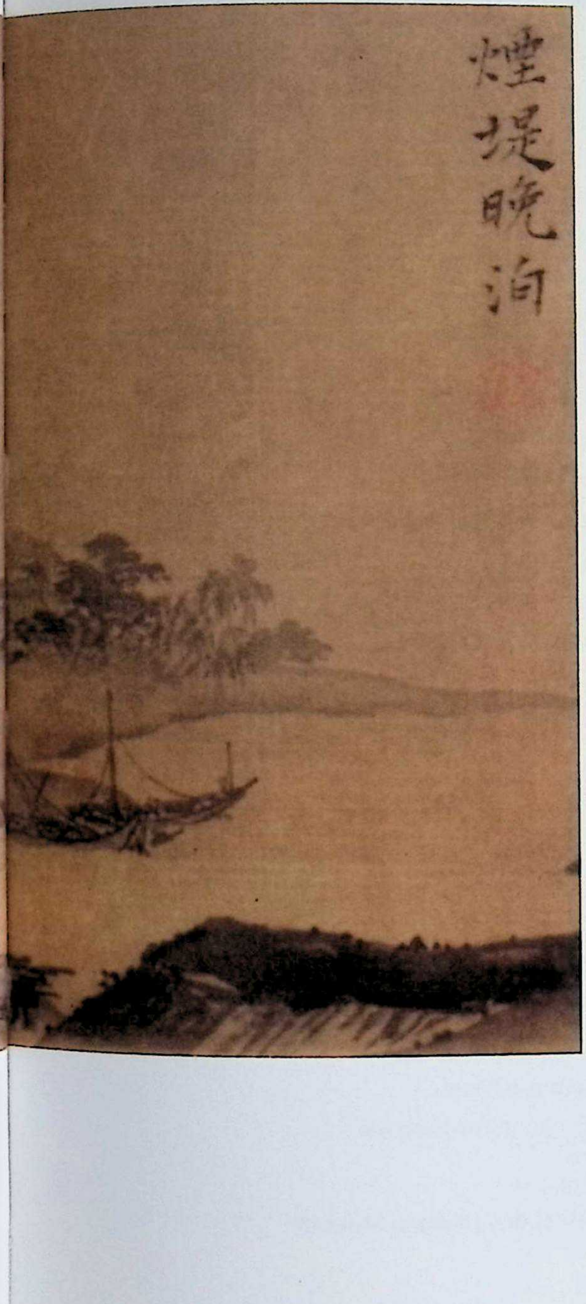
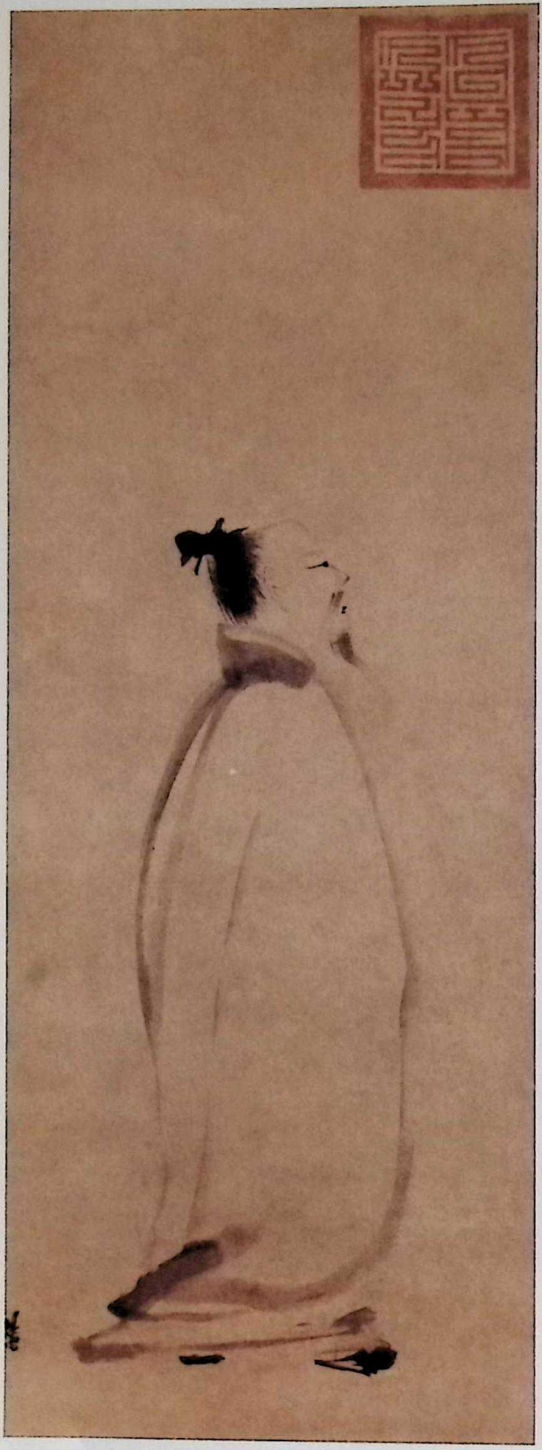


be more than 600cm long. In ancient times when photography was not yet invented, such a scroll could transport the viewer to take an in-depth tour of real landscape without going outdoors, or in other words, "mind travel". Similar layouts of landscape painting were very trendy in the Southern Song Dynasty, such as the well-known "Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Region". This scroll of 12 views probably imitated this popular motif. The captions on the scroll were previously attributed to Emperor Lizong of the Song Dynasty. However, scholars expressed different views later, suggesting that it might be written by Yang Meizi, Empress of Emperor Ningzong or Xie Daoqing, Empress of Emperor Lizong. Anyway, this scroll is closely related to the royal family.

This scroll fully reflects the signature corner-centered composition of Xia Gui. The large chunk of negative space enables the inclusion of thousands of miles of landscape in a tiny space, while heightening a poetic air.

At the end of this scroll are postscripts by Shao Hengzhen, Wang Guxiang, Dong Qichang, Wang Hui, and Duan Fang, among others. It was later brought to the U.S. and purchased by Sickman from Owen Roberts and collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1932.



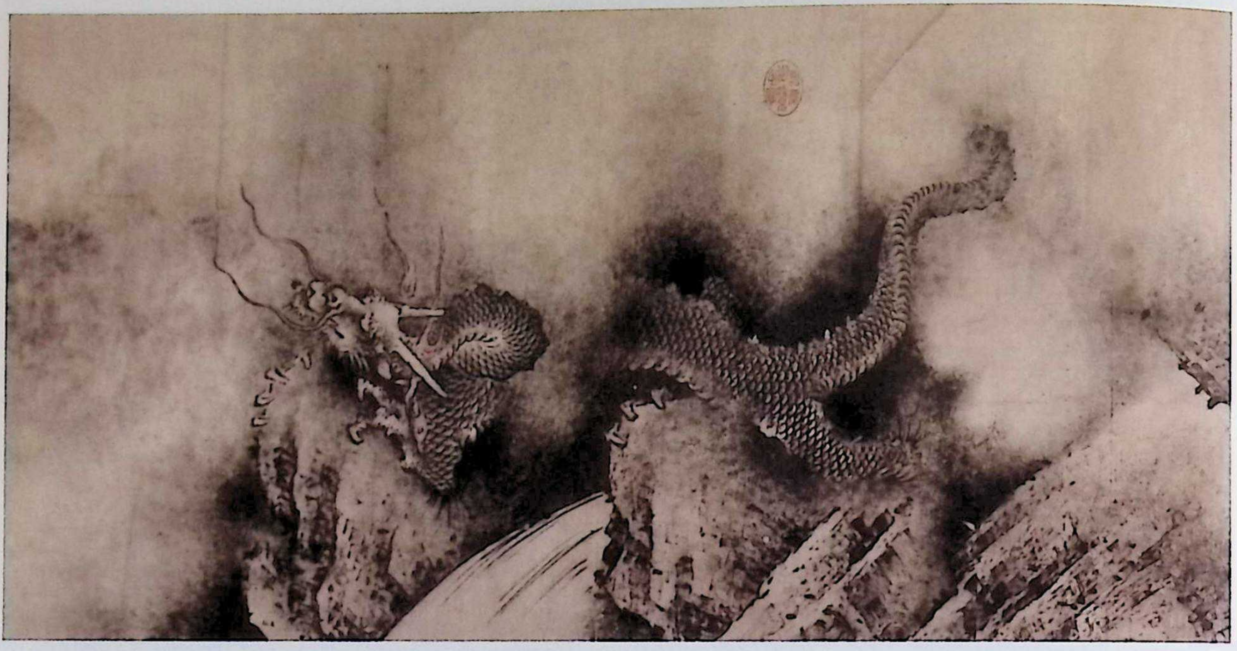
Li Bai Chanting a Poem

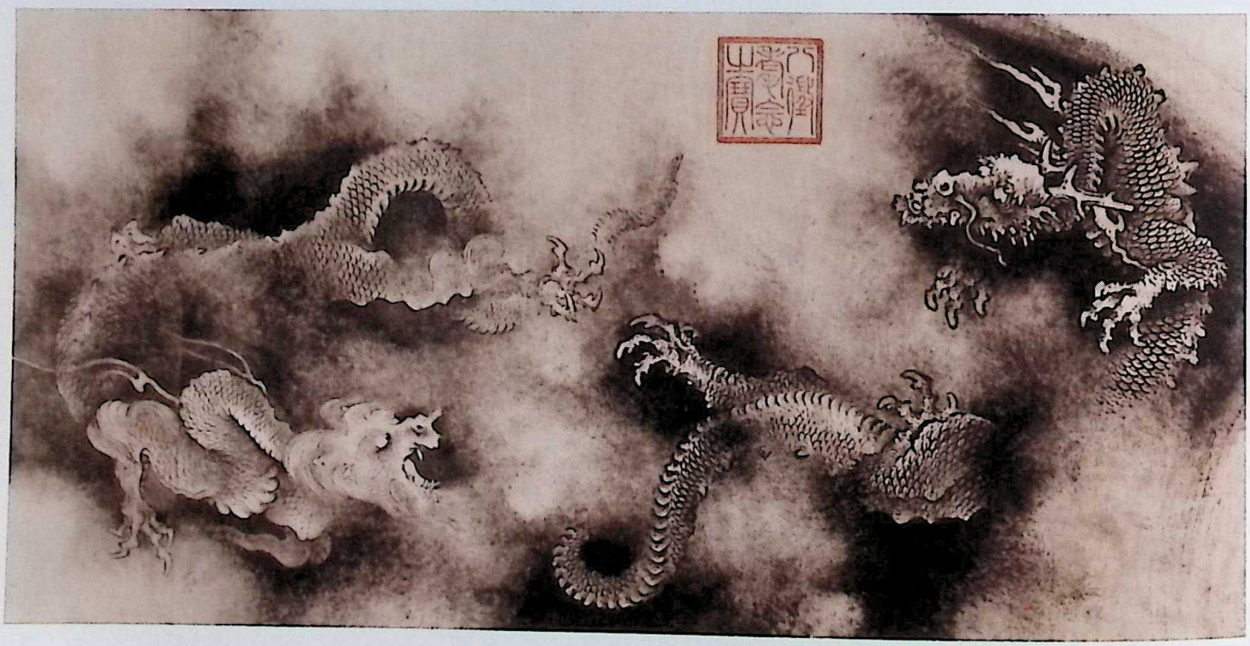
Southern Song Dynasty Liang Kai
Ink on Paper
81.1 × 30.5 cm
Collected in the Tokyo National Museum

Japan has been an important collector of ancient Chinese paintings and calligraphy. Since the 8th century when Japan sent missions and students to China in the Tang Dynasty, there had been a consistent flow of Chinese art treasures to Japan. From the 11th to the 14th centuries, there were hundreds of monks who traveled to China and brought ink and wash paintings created by Zen monks in their spare time back to Japan where they were well-preserved in Buddhist monasteries. Now, paintings by Liang Kai, Muxi, and Yujian, nowhere to be seen in China, can still be seen in Japan.

This painting titled *Li Bai Chanting a Poem* was created by Liang Kai (birth and death years unknown), a painter of the Southern Song Dynasty. According to literature, Liang was an unruly alcoholic. He was once summoned to the Painting Academy under the reign of Emperor Ningzong. The emperor granted him a golden belt, but he refused to accept it, instead hung it in the courtyard. Therefore, people called him "Crazy Liang". Seen from his existing paintings, the style is the man. In this painting, the painter sketched out a dramatic human figure at fast, rhythmic speed in just a few strokes. The head was portrayed in detail yet concise to the right extent. Such unruly and hasty style was called "reduced brushwork" by Xia Wenyan of the Yuan Dynasty. Today's scholars of fine arts history call it "reduced figure painting".

According to literature, Liang Kai befriended many monks, so he might be influenced by Buddhist ideas. Liang's another extant painting titled *The Sixth Patriarch Cutting the Bamboo* is also a concise figure painting. The Japanese especially value Liang's paintings as they see Zen thoughts in these works. This painting was probably brought to Japan by a Japanese monk in the 14th century.





Nine Dragons

Southern Song Dynasty
1244
Chen Rong
Ink and Partial Color on Paper
46.3 × 1096.4 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Chen Rong (birth and death years unknown) is billed as a paragon of painting dragons in today's narrative of painting history. According to literature, he often painted in high spirits after getting drunk, "splashing ink to generate clouds and spraying water to form mists...scribbling at random and applying brush to finish the painting."

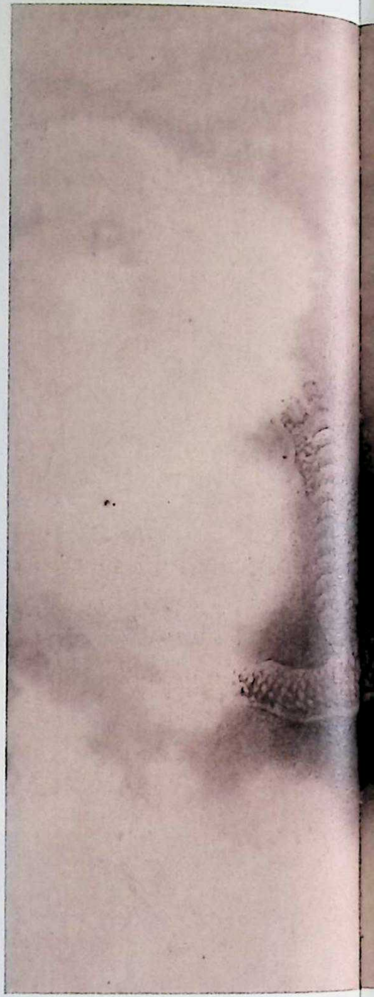
Though its attribution remains controversial, this *Nine Dragons* is largely believed by scholars to be a credible extant piece of painting by Chen Rong. It portrays nine dragons with different postures, coiling on a huge rock, diving into the clouds, frolicking and fighting, or getting ready to go. The application of brush and ink is very aggressive and unique, unlike the moderate and elegant brushwork pursued by later literati painters. Developments in dragon painting since Chen Rong mostly inherited his method of "grasping the art of change". His impacts on Chinese painting history should not be underestimated.

Dragon has long been associated with clouds and rains. Legends have it that dragons painted by Wu Daozi puffed out fog before raining. In Taoism, dragon is all the more associated with praying for rain. Chen once held an official position in Mount Longhu (aka Dragon and Tiger Mountain), Jiangxi, a sacred Taoist mountain in southern China, so his drawings were very likely to be influenced by Taoism. His dragon paintings did often appear in Taoist rituals praying for rain. According to the postscript by Chen at the end of scroll, this scroll was probably created for a Taoist monk or temple. In addition, this scroll has postscripts by many Taoist believers, including Zhang Sicheng, the thirty-ninth Chinese Celestial Master.

According to collector stamps, this scroll was once held by Geng Zhaozhong and the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty, then given to Prince Gong, and ended up in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1917.

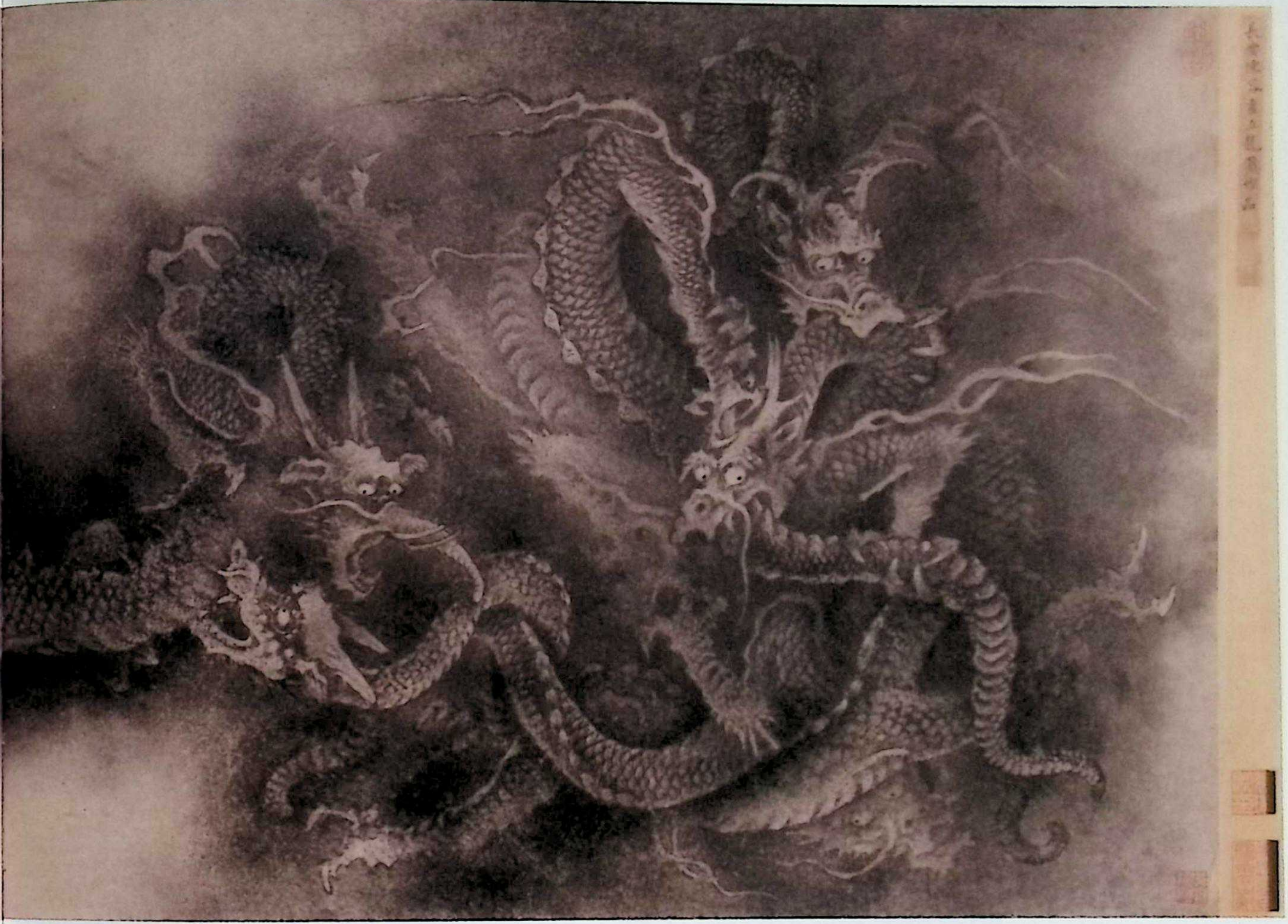
Five Dragons

Southern Song Dynasty
Attributed to Chen Rong
Ink on Paper
34.3 × 59.6 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



Dragon has rich interpretations in Chinese culture and is a very ancient motif in Chinese painting history. Cao Buxing, Zhang Sengyou, and Yang Zihua, among other painters of the Wei-Jin period (220-420), were masters in painting dragons. The historical allusion of "eyes of the dragon" (meaning, to add the finishing touch) was about dragon paintings by Zhang Sengyou. Wu Daozi, a sage in Chinese painting of the Tang Dynasty, was also good at painting dragons. Down to the Song and Yuan dynasties, this tradition of dragon painting continued and evolved among Taoist painters. Though not a main theme in the traditional sense, the dragon motif and its representative painters constitute an integral part of Chinese painting history.

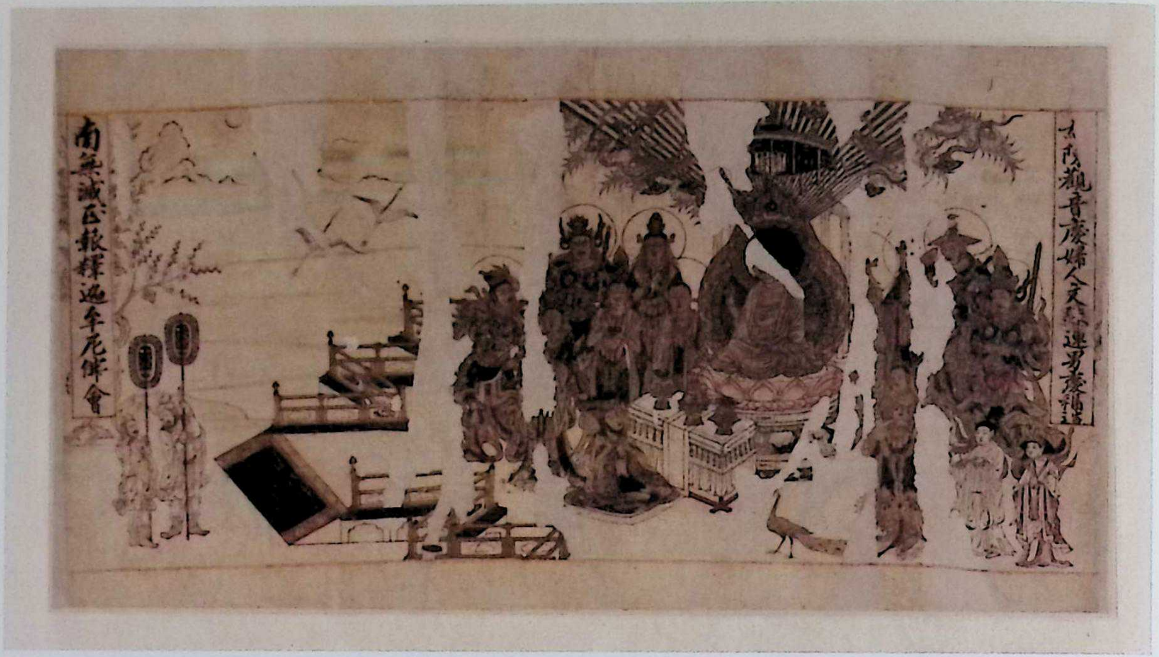
Chen Rong of the Southern Song Dynasty was a weighty figure in the dragon painting tradition not to be ignored, exerting far-reaching impacts on later dragon paintings in style. This *Five Dragons*, based on captions at the beginning of the scroll, is attributed to Chen Rong. Despite of the current controversy among scholars over whether this scroll is indeed an authentic work by Chen or not, it at least belongs to the Chen Rong School. This painting portrays five intermingled dragons, all in rising, hovering postures. The changing ink and wash background appears cloudy, while the images of five dragons are also full of changes, half-



hidden amid clouds, as if blending into one another. The motif and style both quite fit in with dragon paintings by Chen as recorded in literature.

This painting is quite similar to the *Cloud Dragon* attributed to Chen Rong collected in the Palace Museum in terms of dimensions, the appearance of dragon, and technique. The only difference is that the latter one portrays only one dragon. The *Five Dragons* scroll by Chen Rong collected in the Tokyo National Museum also portrays five dragons.

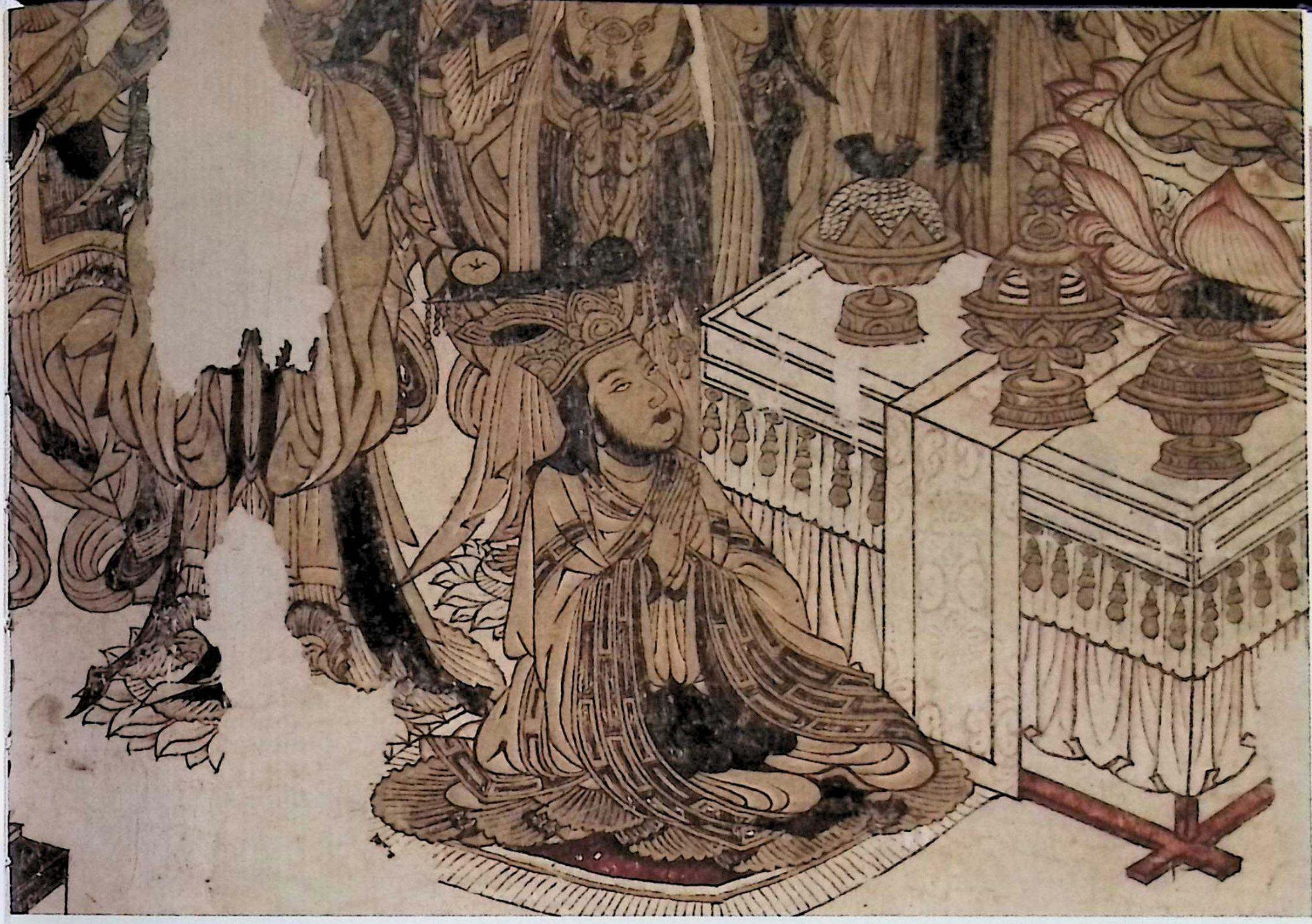
This painting was collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1948.



The Buddha Addressing Yamaraja at Kusinagara
Southern Song Dynasty
Artist Unknown
Ink, Color and Gold on Paper
28 × 52.4 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

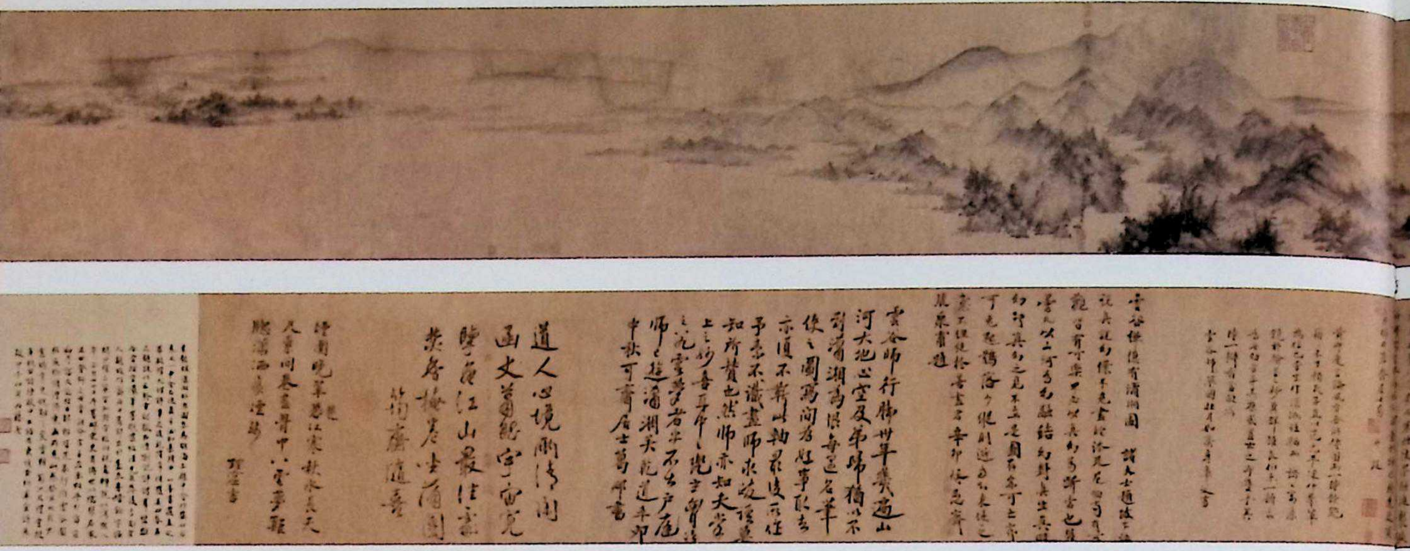
Though mounted as a hand scroll, this scroll is closely related to murals. On both sides of the scroll are captions saying "...Guanyin and Manjusri to celebrate for blessings", and "Namo eliminates evil retribution at the Buddha Assembly of Sakyamuni." This is how this scroll derived its name. Boxed captions, very common in murals, are often used as supplementary descriptions to what's painted, and to indicate the identity of the patron and the ins and outs.

At the center of the scroll is Sakyamuni who sits cross-legged on a lotus seat, accompanied by Bodhisattvas and Lokapalas on both sides. In front of the lotus seat is a man kneeling down. Some scholars argue that this man is Yama, the God of Death, and this painting portrays a scene of Sakyamuni vyakarana (predicting buddhahood) for Yama. On the lower right corner of the scroll are two women supposed to be patrons, while down the steps on the lower left corner are two attendants holding fans. These four figures are outlined to differentiate from



the main body of the scroll with a brown base, as if to suggest that these are secular people.

On the background are flowers, trees, distant mountains, and two soaring cranes. This scroll, both in terms of composition and brushwork, can be traced back to murals of the Tang Dynasty at Dunhuang Grottoes. No wonder that this scroll was once believed to be created by an artist of the Tang Dynasty. At the end of the scroll is the text of a scripture dated the same as the painting. There are postscripts by Zheng Zuchen, Weng Fanggang, Wu Rongguang, Duan Fang, and Yang Shoujing, among others. According to these postscripts, it was originally held by Song Luo, then donated to Kaixian Monastery, Mount Lushan in the 33rd year under the reign of Emperor Kangxi (1694), and acquired by Yi Shifu from a monk at this monastery. Today, most scholars believe it was not created in the Tang Dynasty, instead roughly in the early 12th century. This scroll was sold to the Freer Gallery of Art via Yamanaka and Co. in 1926.

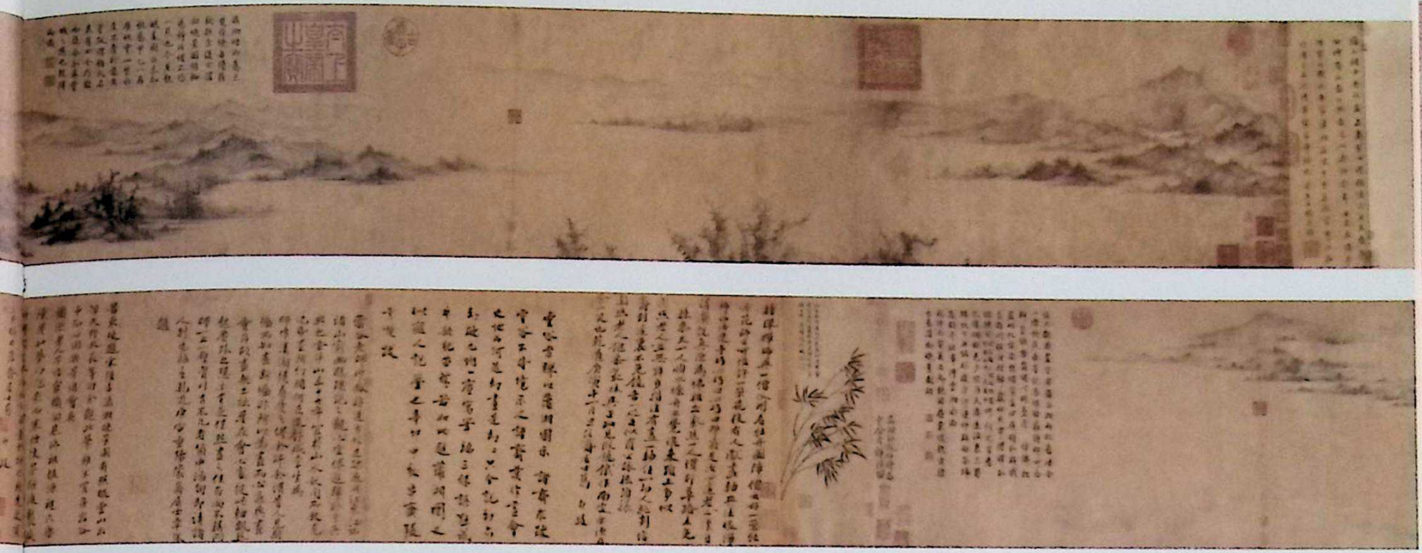


Dream Journey along the Xiao and Xiang Rivers

Southern Song Dynasty
The 12th century
Li (?)
Ink on Paper
30.3 × 400.4 cm
Collected in the Tokyo National Museum

This *Dream Journey along the Xiao and Xiang Rivers* scroll was previously attributed by Dong Qichang to Li Gonglin. According to postscripts by contemporaries of the author at the end of scroll, however, this scroll was painted by another painter with the surname of Li from Shucheng where Li Gonglin was from, and the two painters lived in roughly the same period. So the misunderstanding arose. It is probably due to this misunderstanding that Emperor Qianlong valued this scroll so much. The emperor personally wrote "Vividly Capturing the Landscape of Yun-Meng Lakes" at the beginning of scroll, and wrote a postscript and a poem respectively in the middle of scroll. As if not enough, the emperor painted a clump of bamboos at the end of scroll. All these actions show Emperor Qianlong's love for this scroll.

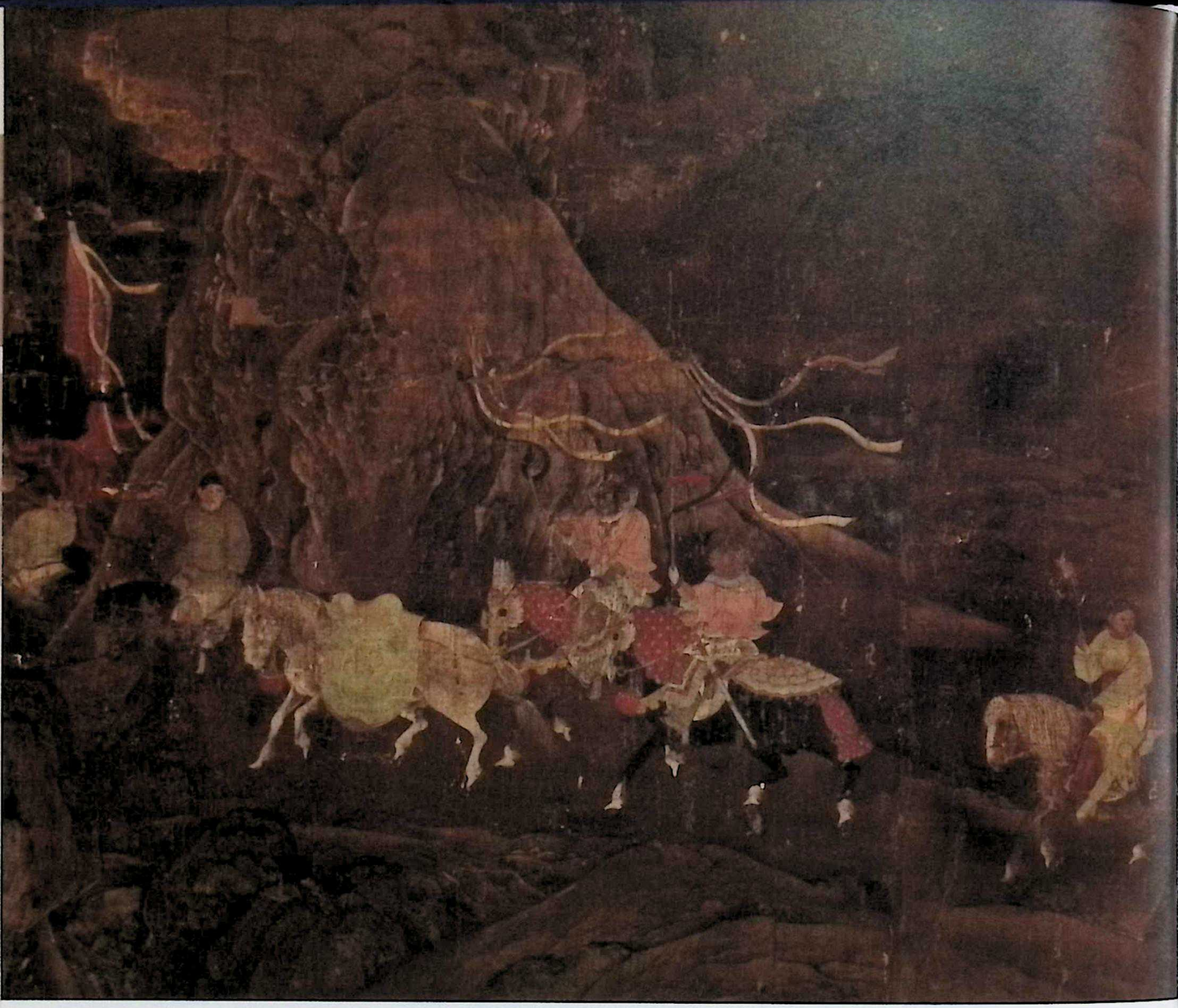
The postscripts of this scroll are informative. This scroll is supposed to be commissioned by Unkoku, a Chan (Zen) master, who retreated to Wuxing after visiting "many mountains in east Zhejiang and Jiangxi" but to his regret had not been able to visit the Xiao and Xiang region. Therefore, he asked Li to paint the landscape there for mind travel. This is how this scroll derived its name. Paintings about Xiao and



Xiang landscape were very popular in the late Northern Song Dynasty. According to postscripts at the end of scroll, Unkoku would commission every master painter he met to create paintings about this region. One can imagine how Xiao and Xiang views were sought after by literati back then. The famous "eight views of the Xiao and Xiang region" motif in painting history emerged roughly during this period.

The painter employed light ink and short, lean lines to present the cloudy landscape of the Xiao and Xiang rivers. The brushwork for trees and rocks was likely to be influenced by Li Cheng and Guo Xi, but the painter adapted it to fit in with the landscape of water towns south of the Yangtze.

There were dramatic twist and turns in the whereabouts of this piece in modern times. It was brought out of the palace around the late Qing Dynasty, and after several changes of hands, ended up in Japan where it was acquired by a collector Seidou Kikuchi. According to the postscript by Konan Naito at the end of scroll, this scroll, along with the *Cold Food Observance* scroll by Su Shi, was bravely saved by Seidou Kikuchi in a fire following the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923. After the end of the Second World War, this scroll was collected in the Tokyo National Museum.

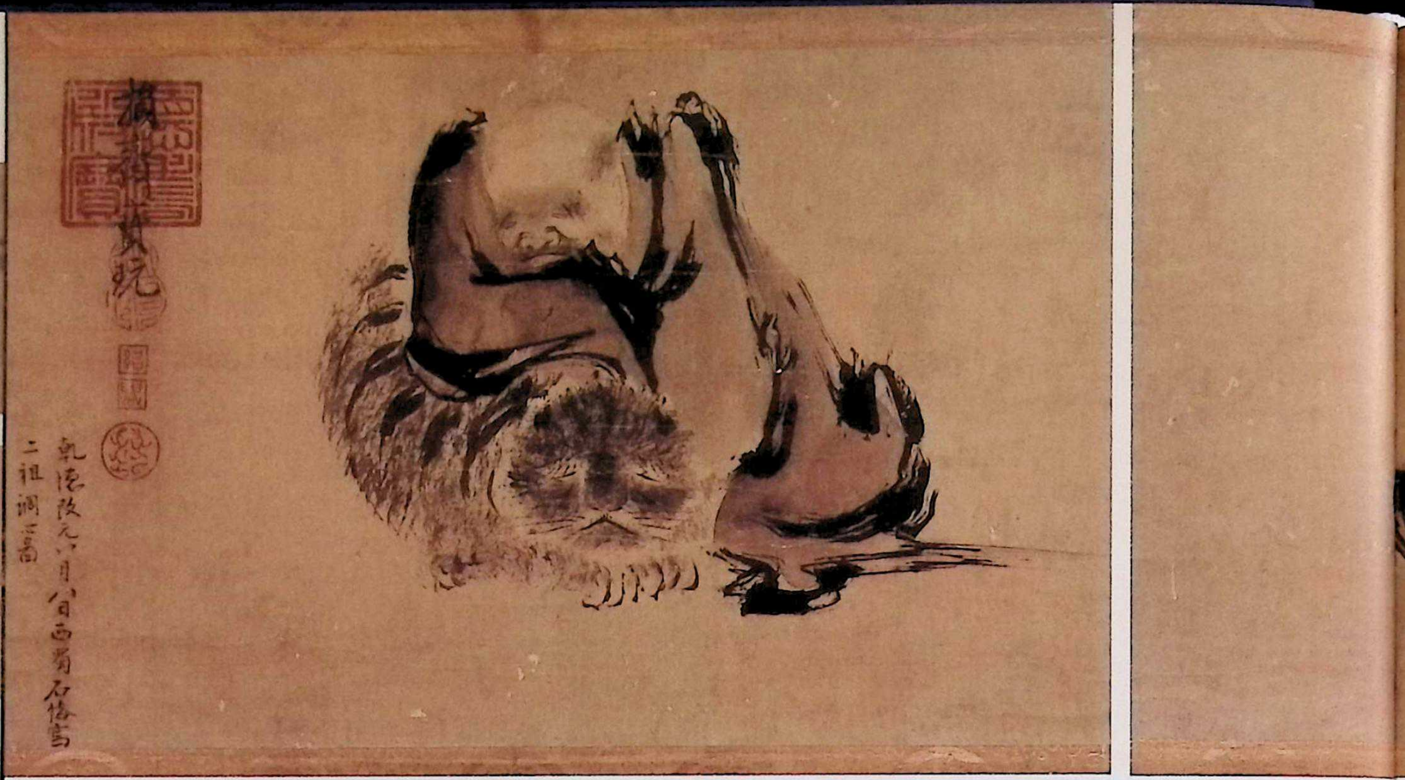


Emperor Xuanzong's Flight to Shu

Southern Song Dynasty
The mid-12th century
Artist Unknown
Ink and Color on Silk
82.9 × 113.7 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

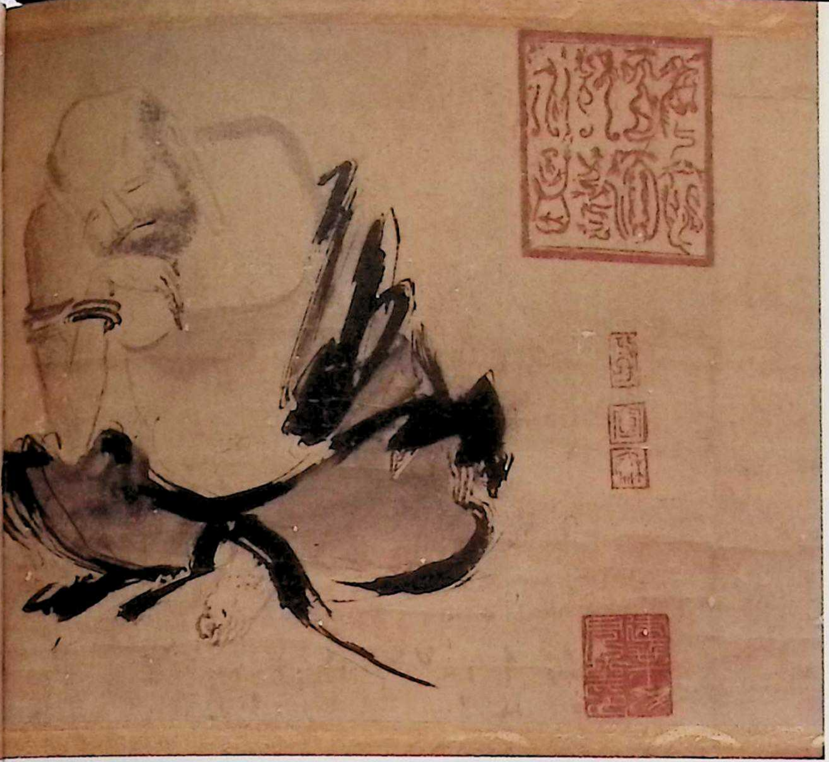
This painting portrays a contingent of people on horses making their way ahead on a bumpy road flanked by steep mountains. The brushwork for trees, rocks, and human figures is quite archaic and heavily colored. There is no inscription. It is formerly titled "People Traveling on Horses". There is a scroll with similar components, now collected in the Taipei Palace Museum, which Emperor Qianlong and his connoisseur team named "Traveling in Mountains Scroll of the Song Dynasty". Over nearly half a century of research on the history of fine arts, scholars have unveiled the mists shrouding these works, and named this scroll *Emperor Xuanzong's Flight to Shu*, a copy of the Song Dynasty after the original painted by Li Zhaodao, one of the forefathers of blue and green landscape painting of the Tang Dynasty. It is believed to portray the scene of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty fleeing to Shu during the Anshi Rebellion. In light of this result, this copy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) was renamed accordingly. It is recognized that the scene depicted in this scroll coincides with a scene in the *Song of Everlasting Regret* by Bai Juyi, "At the foot of the Emei Mountains, few came that way. Their banners seemed less resplendent; even the sun seemed dim."

Some scholars argue that this scroll is incomplete, possibly part of a floor screen of around the 12th century. According to the imperial stamp affixed to it, this scroll was once held by the Imperial Storehouse of the Ming Dynasty. It was acquired by the MET under the auspices of Alan Priest, then curator of the Department of Far Eastern Art at MET in 1941 when it was initially named "The Tribute Horse".


乾德改元八月八日西蜀石恪寫
二祖調心圖

Shi Ke (birth and death years unknown), according to literature and his paintings, was a Sichuan painter living between the late Five Dynasties and the early Northern Song Dynasty. As recorded in *The Xuanhe Catalogue of Paintings*, Shi was good at painting Taoist and Buddhist figures in an unrestrained and unconventional style. Most of his paintings, now nowhere to be seen, are supposed to be murals on the walls of temples and monasteries. *The Second Zen Patriarch in Contemplation* is the only piece now in existence attributed to Shi Ke.

This painting is re-mounted into two hanging scrolls and it might have been a hand scroll. The two figures in this painting are in contemplation. One places one hand under his cheek. The other leans on a sleeping tiger. These two figures appear witty and interesting, in line with the description that Shi Ke "likes painting quirky ancient figures" according to literature. The brushwork is minimal yet changing, which tallies with the description "unbridled and unconventional brushwork" recorded in literature. The clothes are outlined in heavy strokes, with its volume expressed with wash and ink shades. The faces are portrayed in detail, with facial features and hair brushed with dry strokes to highlight texture. Such unconstrained brushwork is undeniably and undoubtedly very expressive and visually striking, unlike the

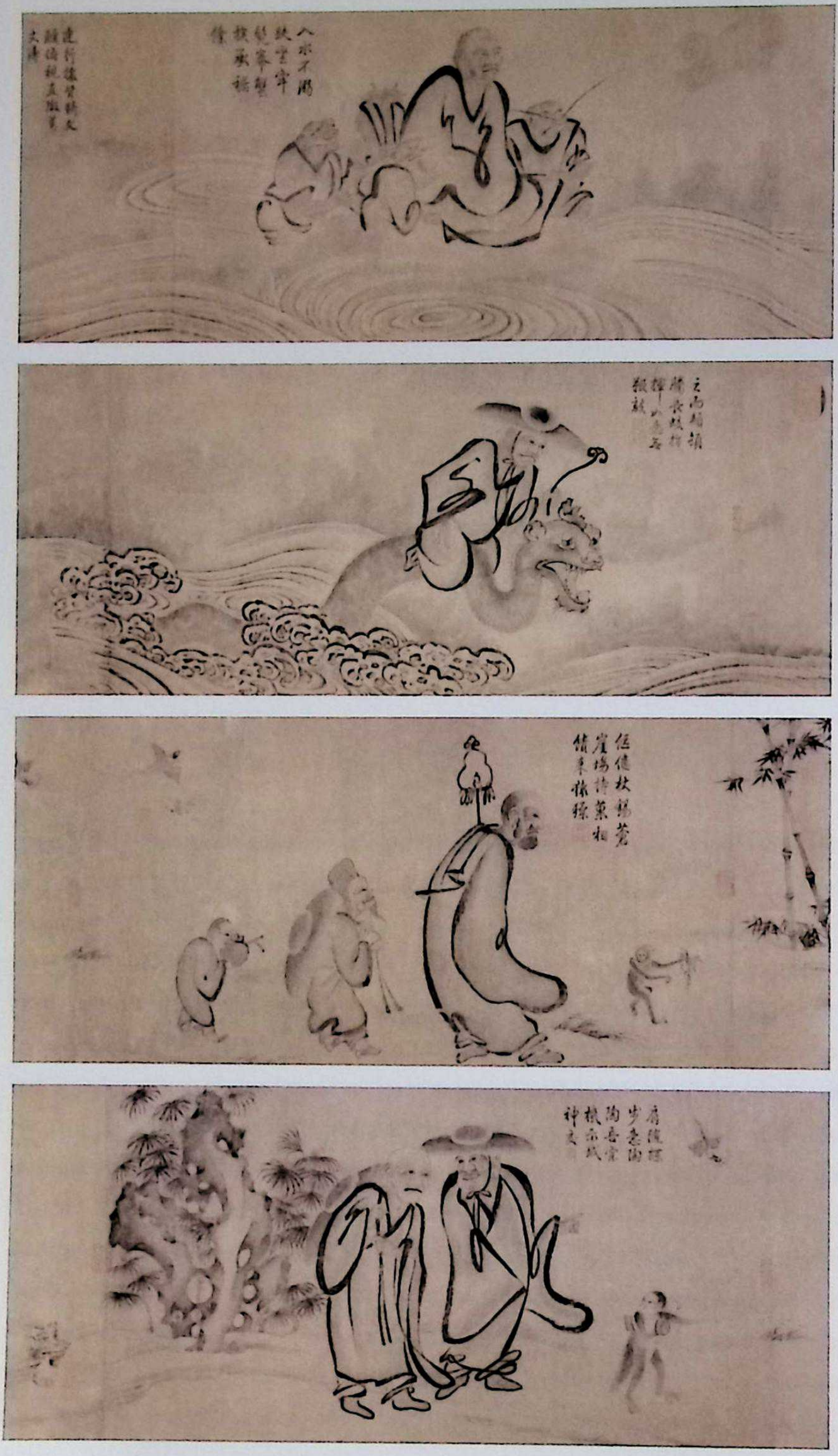


The Second Zen Patriarch in Contemplation

Southern Song Dynasty
The 13th century
Shi Ke (inscribed)
Ink on Paper
36.5 × 47 cm, 2 pieces
Collected in the Tokyo National Museum

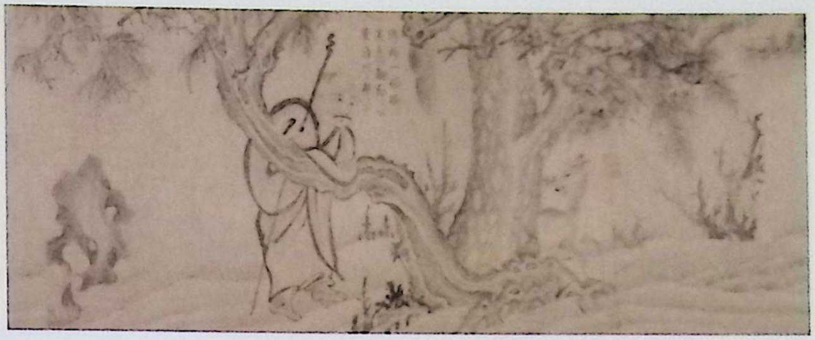
aesthetics pursued by mainstream literati painters of later generations. Unfortunately, such a style gradually fell into oblivion due to the lack of successors. Now, only traces of it can be found in works created by some Taoist painters.

Though this painting is explicitly inscribed with the time of painting and the author, its authenticity is still in question. First, in the age when Shi Ke lived, most painters had not yet been accustomed to signing their works, let alone adding such exact date of creation. Second, in spite of the stamp of the Imperial Storehouse of the Northern Song Dynasty affixed, this painting was not included in *The Xuanhe Catalogue of Paintings*. Also, the stamp in its own right is rather dubious. The Tokyo National Museum (TNM), where this painting is housed, has judged that it was created in the 13th century. According to the TNM, in the 14th and 15th centuries, the Ashikaga family amassed a huge holding of Chinese paintings, and almost all well-known paintings of the Southern Song Dynasty now collected in the TNM were acquired during this period. *The Second Zen Patriarch in Contemplation* was probably brought to Japan at that time too.



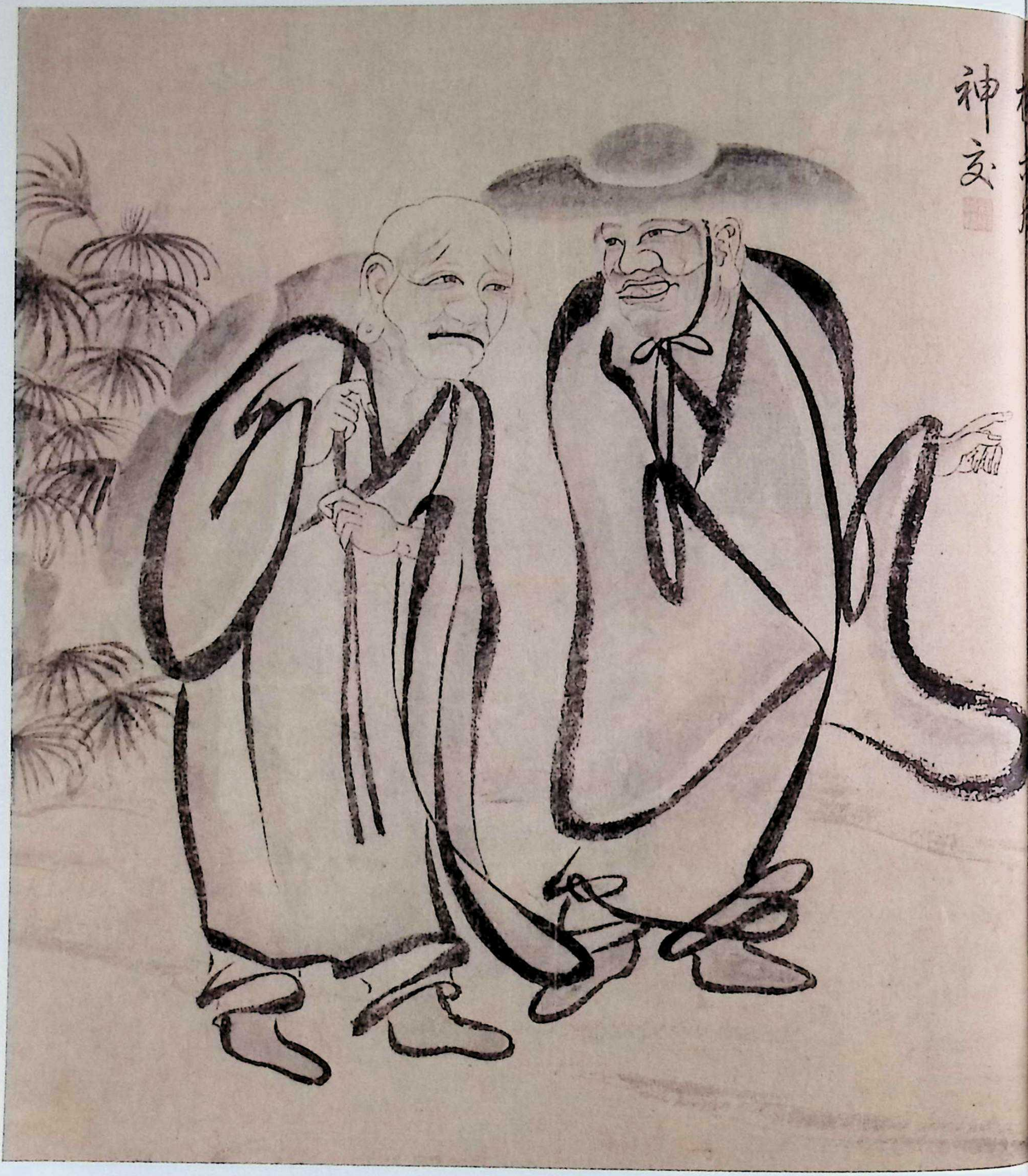
The Sixteen Luohan

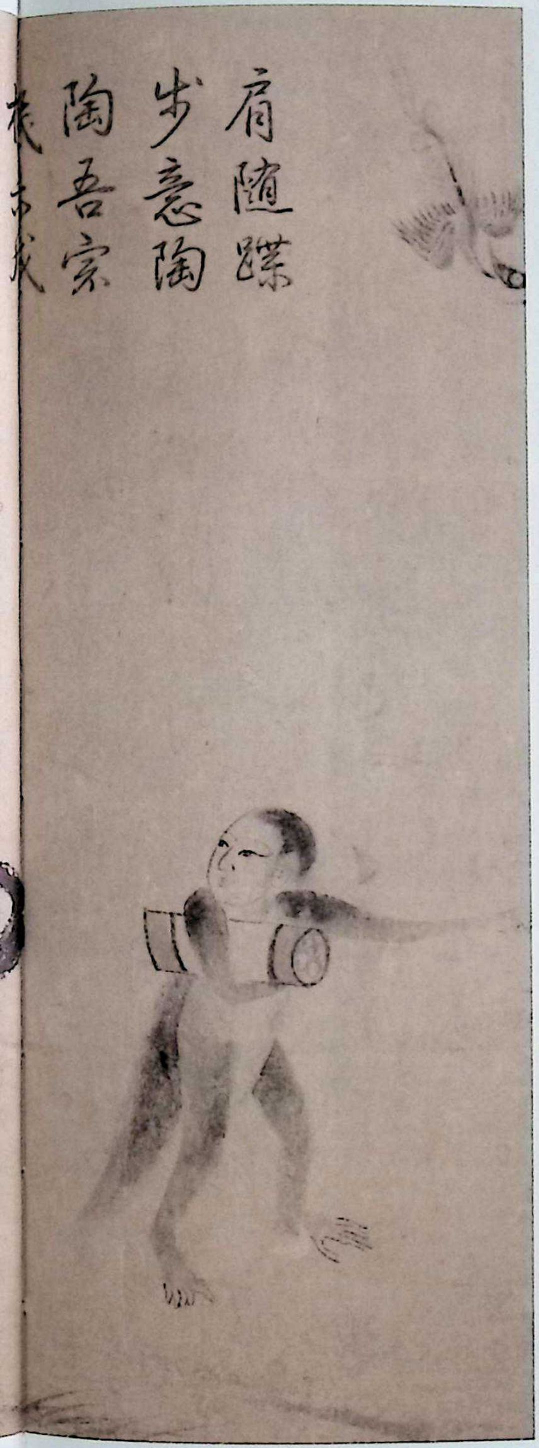
Southern Song Dynasty
The 13th century
Artist Unknown
Slight Color on Paper
32.7 × 848.36 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



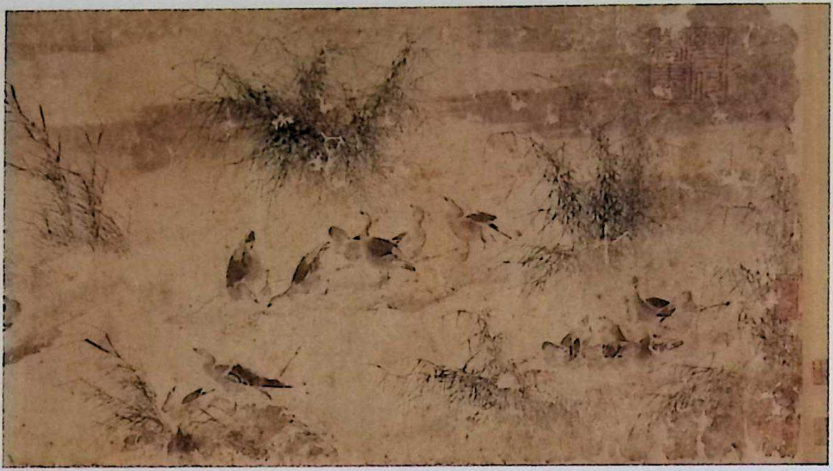
Though *The Xuanhe Catalogue of Paintings* records that Zhang Sengyou, a painter of the Southern Dynasties (420-589), once painted the sixteen Buddhist arhats, the sixteen arhats were not widely embraced prior to the Tang Dynasty. After Xuanzang translated the *Record of the Duration of the Dharma Spoken by the Great Arhat Nandimitra* into Chinese, belief in and images of the sixteen arhats grew widespread. According to the Catalogue, Lu Lengjia and Wang Wei created such works. The statues of the sixteen arhats, created during the States of Wu and Yue period (907-978) and discovered at the Rosy Cloud Cave, Hangzhou, are the earliest sculptures about the sixteen arhats uncovered to date.

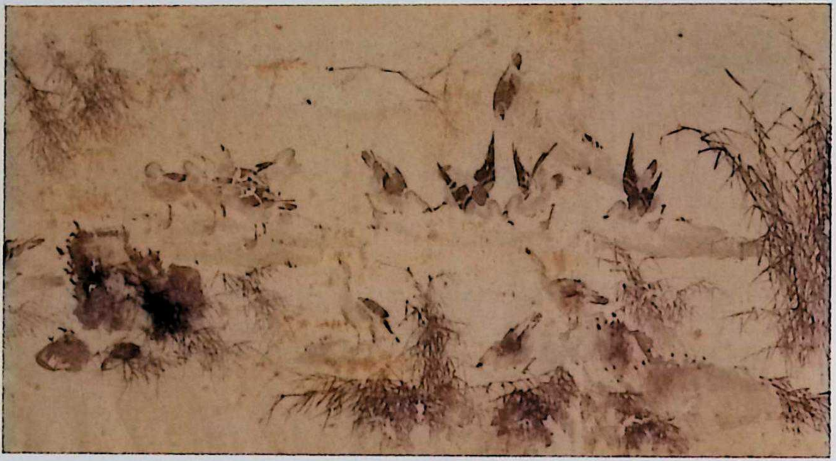
This scroll was mentioned in the *Beaded Grove of the Secret Hall* and was originally titled *The Sixteen Yingzhen Scroll of the Tang Dynasty*. The term "Yingzhen", a Buddhist word, is a literal translation of arhat, meaning the worthy one or the perfected one, one who has gained insight into the true nature of existence and has achieved nirvana. The *Record of the Duration of the Dharma* has no description of the appearances of the sixteen arhats, so painters and image makers mostly artistically exaggerated and created eccentric images of them based on monks in real life. According to literature, the Sixteen Arhats created by Guanxiu, a celebrated Buddhist monk of the Five Dynasties, have "strange physiques and foreign appearances." In contrast, the arhats portrayed in this scroll appear solemn yet a bit funny.

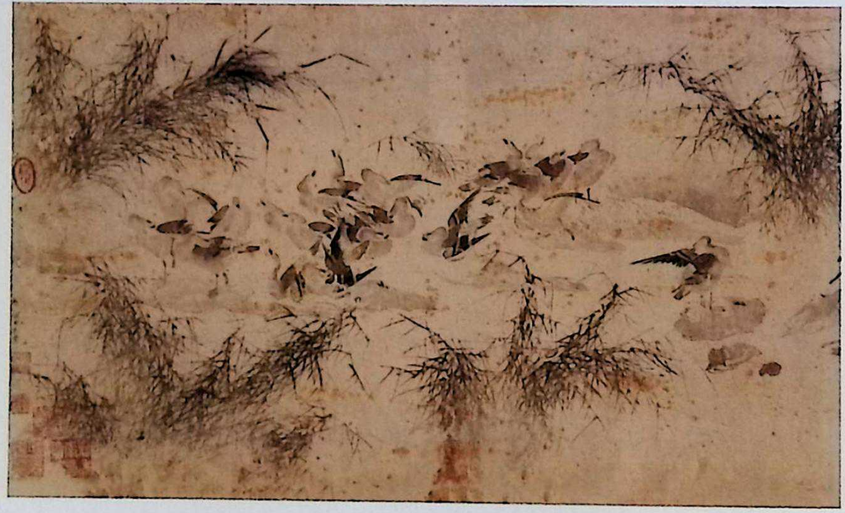

神交



According to the postscript by Qiu Yuexiu (1712-1773), a contributor to the compilation of the *Shi Qu Library of Treasured Works*, this scroll was presented to Emperor Qianlong by him in person. The emperor valued this work so much that he personally wrote a preface, a long postscript, and a poem. He even copied after a part of it, which he named *A Scroll Imitated after the Arhats of the Tang Dynasty*, currently in the Palace Museum. According to a presentation by Colin Mackenzie, Senior Curator of East Asian Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, at the 2015 International Seminar on the *Shi Qu Library of Treasured Works*, this scroll was acquired by the Nelson-Atkins in the 1950s.







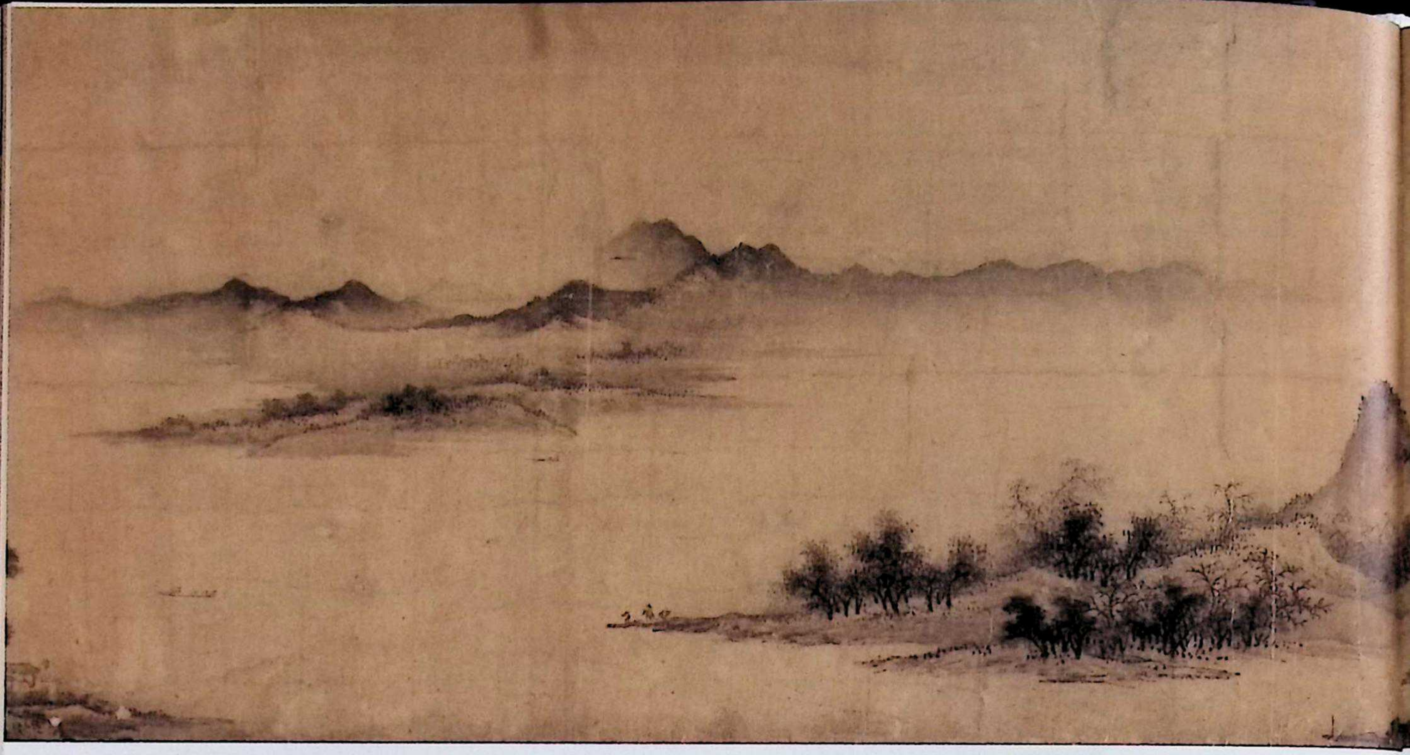
The Hundred Geese

From the Southern Song Dynasty to the Yuan Dynasty
Ma Ben (inscribed)
Ink on Paper
45 × 579 cm
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

The Hundred Geese, a long scroll, centrally portrays various postures of goose. The weeds, shoals, slopes, and rocks, as background, indicate the inhabitant of these geese while serving as spacing tools, avoiding visual fatigue of viewers when they look at the long canvas. The geese, in threes and fours, are resting or foraging on the bank, or frolicking and flying across the weeds. The sheer number of geese justifies its title "The Hundred Geese". The brushwork of the whole scroll, boneless, is freewheeling and casual.

As the end of the scroll is inscribed with "By Ma Ben of Hezhong" (today's Yongji, Shanxi Province), this scroll was previously attributed to Ma Ben (birth and death years unknown), member of the Imperial Painting Academy during the Emperor Huizong administration. However, judging from the style, it does not fit in with the exquisite style of flower-and-bird paintings of the Northern Song Dynasty. Instead, its loose brushwork and flowing wash and ink can be traced in academy paintings of the Southern Song Dynasty. In this light, scholars now generally believe that this scroll can be dated up to the late Southern Song or the early Yuan Dynasty. Ma Ben, born in a prestigious painting family of the Song Dynasty, is the great grandfather of Ma Yuan, one of the "Four Master Painters of the Southern Song Dynasty." According to literature, Ma Ben was fond of painting one-hundred-something, such as hundreds of goose, apes, horses and deer. Therefore, it is easy to imagine that such a scroll is likely to be deceptively attributed by a later painter to Ma Ben in order to boost its value.

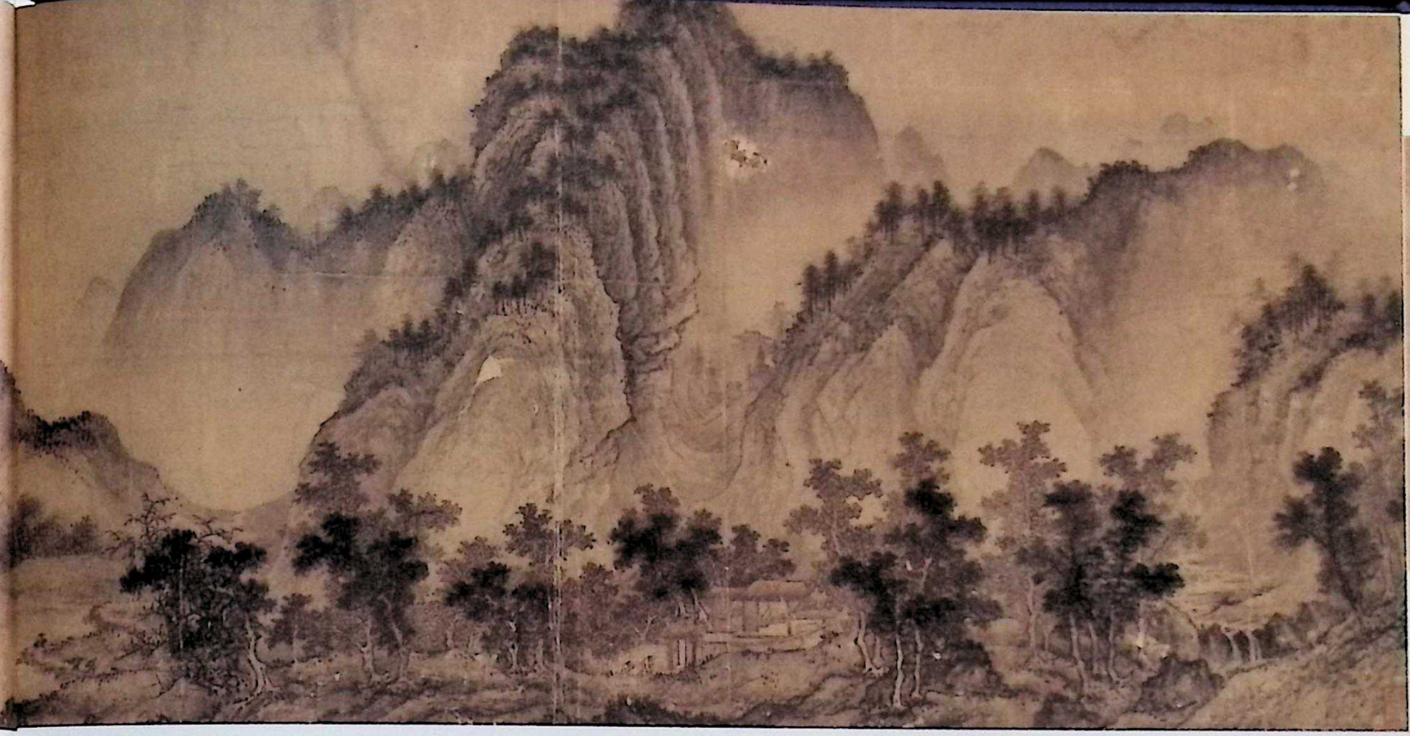
Seen from the collector stamps, this scroll was once held by Xiang Yuanbian and later in the hands of Wu Yuanhui, a collector of the late Qing Dynasty. This scroll, one of the first Chinese paintings brought to the Honolulu Museum of Art, was donated by Anna Rice Cooke, founder of the museum, in 1927 when it was founded.



The end of this scroll is accompanied with comments by Dong Qichang: "This is the authentic *Living in the Mountains* by Dong Beiyuan." This attribution was later recognized by collectors and commentators. Accordingly, this scroll had been attributed to Dong Yuan (i.e., Dong Beiyuan) ever since. Today's scholars, however, do not agree with Dong Qichang, instead attribute this scroll to a painter of the Kin or Yuan Dynasty.

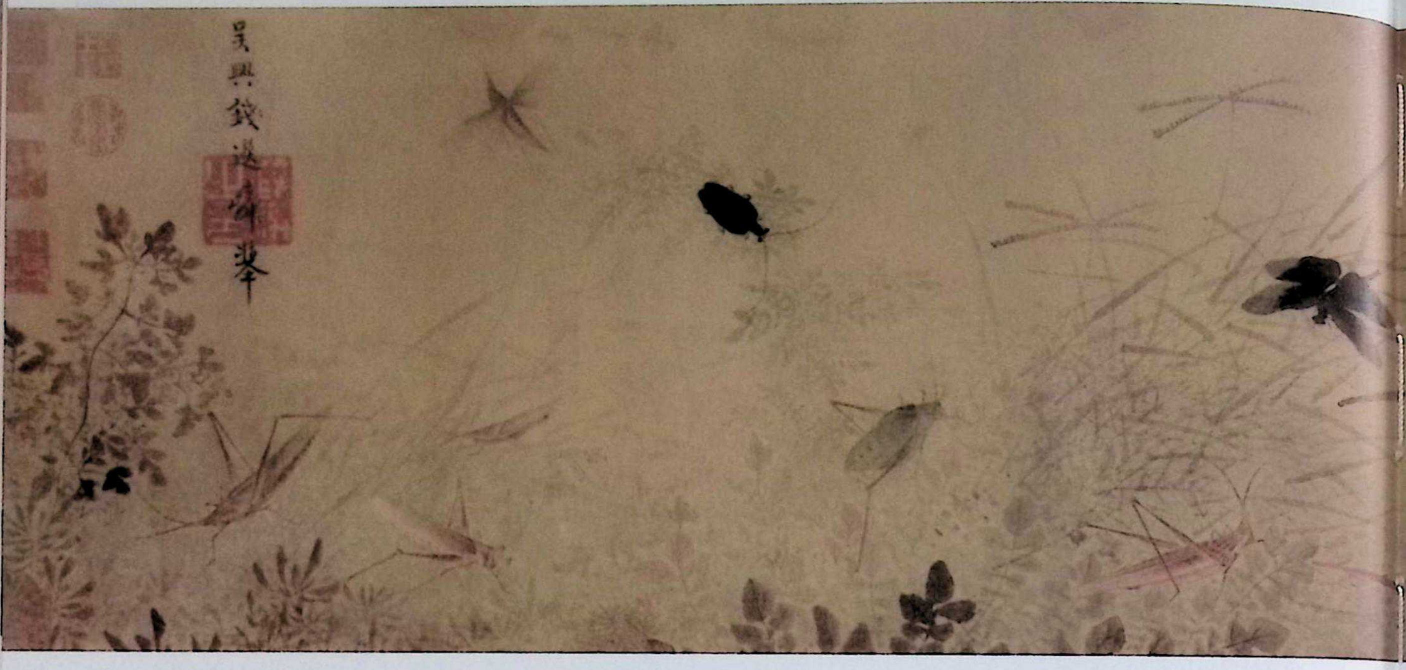
This scroll, to the knowledge of scholars, does not look like a piece of work by Dong Yuan. It is quite different from the style of Dong as recorded in literature on painting history. The first half of the scroll portrays layered peaks below which are waterfalls and streams, and several tiny cottages hidden in the groves. Half way up the mountains, there is a half hidden temple. There are travelers trekking along a mountain trail. The second half portrays flat, distant views, including misty trees on banks and shoals, several people on horses standing along the riverside, and, on the river, a boat drifting away as if beyond the canvas. Although the artist is unidentified, this scroll's brushwork and composition show the painter's masterly skill and stunning artistic level.

Clear Weather in the Valley
From the Kin Dynasty to the Yuan Dynasty
Artist Unknown
Ink and Color on Paper
37.5 × 150.8 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Zhang Heng, a more recent connoisseur, judged that it was from a period after the Jingkang Incident but before the Yuan Dynasty as there is a concave earthen bed in the cottage, a characteristic of lifestyle after the Jurchen people's entry in the Central Plains. Some scholars, based on comparative analysis of composition, believe it is from the Kin Dynasty. Distant mountains, ancient temples, valleys, and travelers are commonly seen in paintings of the Northern Song Dynasty. The painting styles of the Kin Dynasty closely followed the tradition of the Northern Song Dynasty and was less influenced by academy painting of the Southern Song Dynasty.

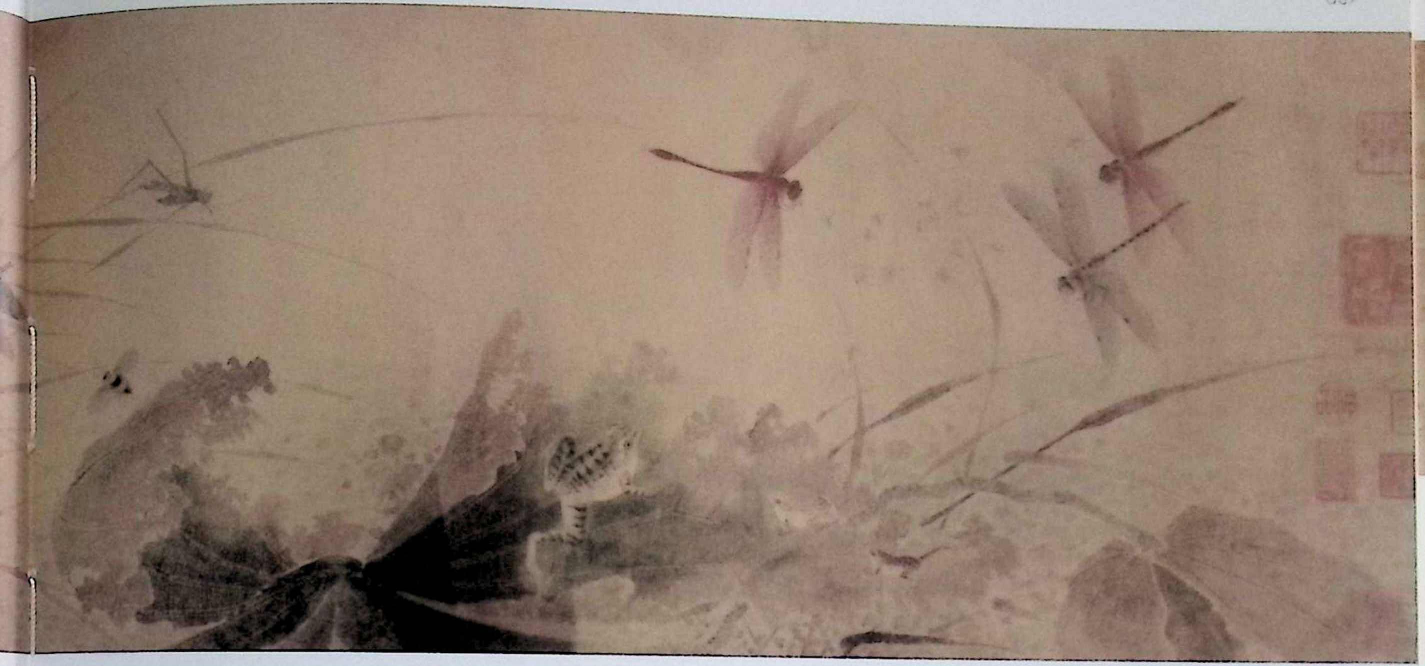
At the end of scroll are postscripts by Dong Qichang, Wang Shimin, and Duan Fang, among others, which show that this scroll was in the collection of Zhang Yandeng in the Ming Dynasty, and held by Wanyan Jingxian in the late Qing Dynasty. In 1912, Kakuzō Okakura, then an adviser to the Oriental Art Department, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), purchased it from Wanyan. Ever since, this scroll has been in the holding of the MFA.



Qian Xuan (1239-1299), an important painter of the early Yuan Dynasty, lived as a recluse in Wuxing along the Taihu Lake after the Song Dynasty was replaced by the Yuan Dynasty, and was touted as one of the "Eight Talents of Wuxing" together with Zhao Mengfu, a leading painter of the Yuan Dynasty. Qian's conversation with Zhao on "literati painting" contributed a lot theoretically to literati painting. Unlike Zhao, Qian did not serve the Yuan Dynasty administration, thus billed as "the Song Dynasty loyalist painter" by later generations. According to literature, Qian painted at an early age with great talent and skill. Seen from his extant paintings, he excelled in landscape, flower-and-bird, and figure paintings.

Early Autumn
Yuan Dynasty
Qian Xuan
Ink and Color on Paper
26.7 × 120.7 cm
Collected in the Detroit Institute of Arts

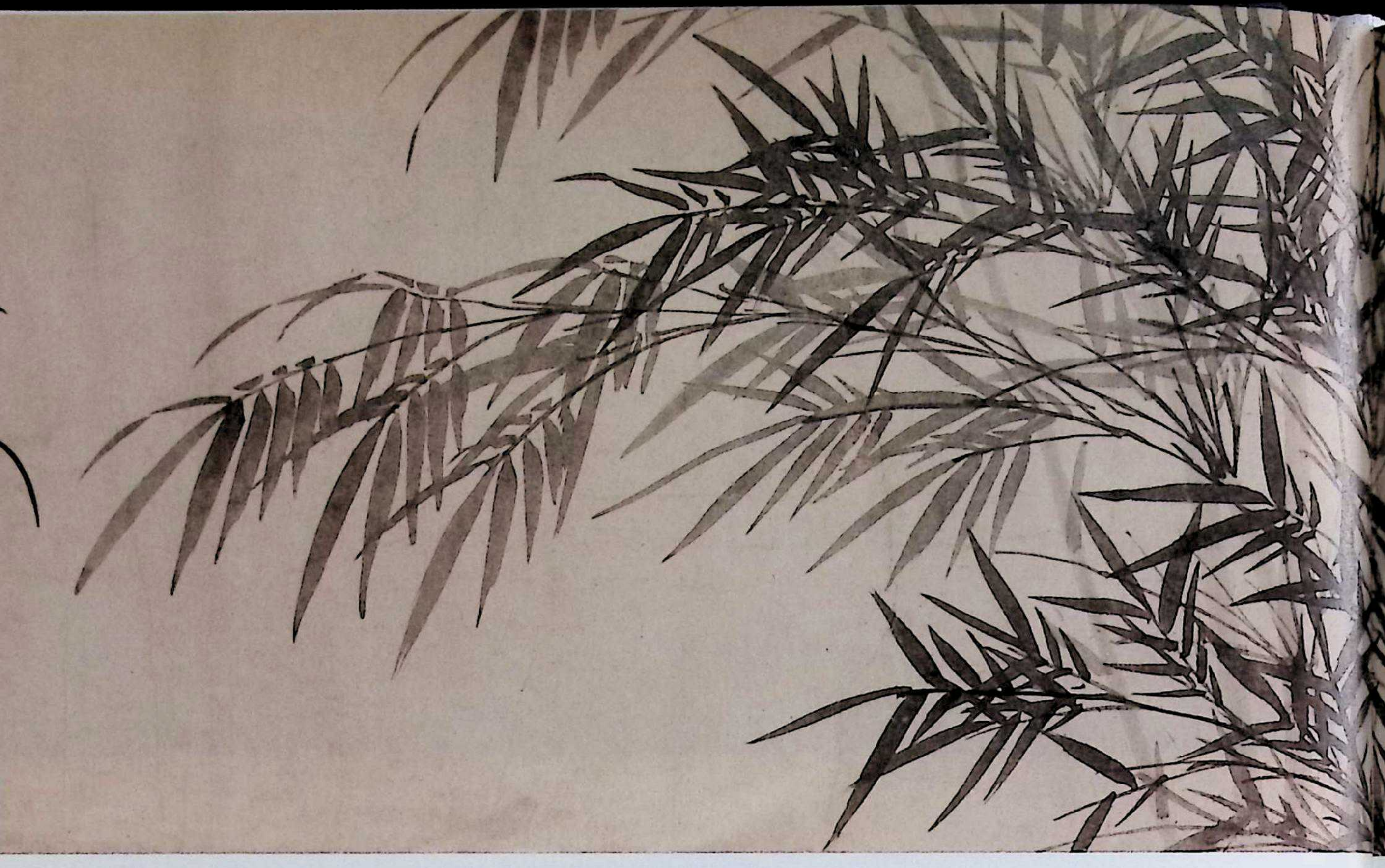
This *Early Autumn*, with a pond as background, portrays a variety of grasses and insects on the long scroll. Though the waned lotus leaves at the beginning indicate the decline of season, the busy little creatures inject life into the entire scroll. Under the painter's brush, life and death, and stillness and dynamics co-exist in harmony in a small universe. The boneless strokes at random combine with detailed delineation, while the



changing shades of ink complement with light, elegant colors, fully showing the painter's skill.

In spite of the inscriptions of Qian Xuan at the end of scroll, it remains in question whether this scroll is an authentic piece by Qian or not. According to records, in his later years, paintings falsely attributed to Qian had been prevalent in the market, forcing him to take actions against such forgery. On a painting by Qian Xuan unearthed in a tomb of the early Ming Dynasty, Qian revealed that, to differentiate his own paintings from faked ones, he changed his style name to "Zhaxi Weng", which seems corroborates what is recorded in literature. James Cahill, an American scholar of Chinese art, believes that this scroll is from the Ming Dynasty, with the signature and seal of Qian Xuan imitated by a painter of the Ming Dynasty.

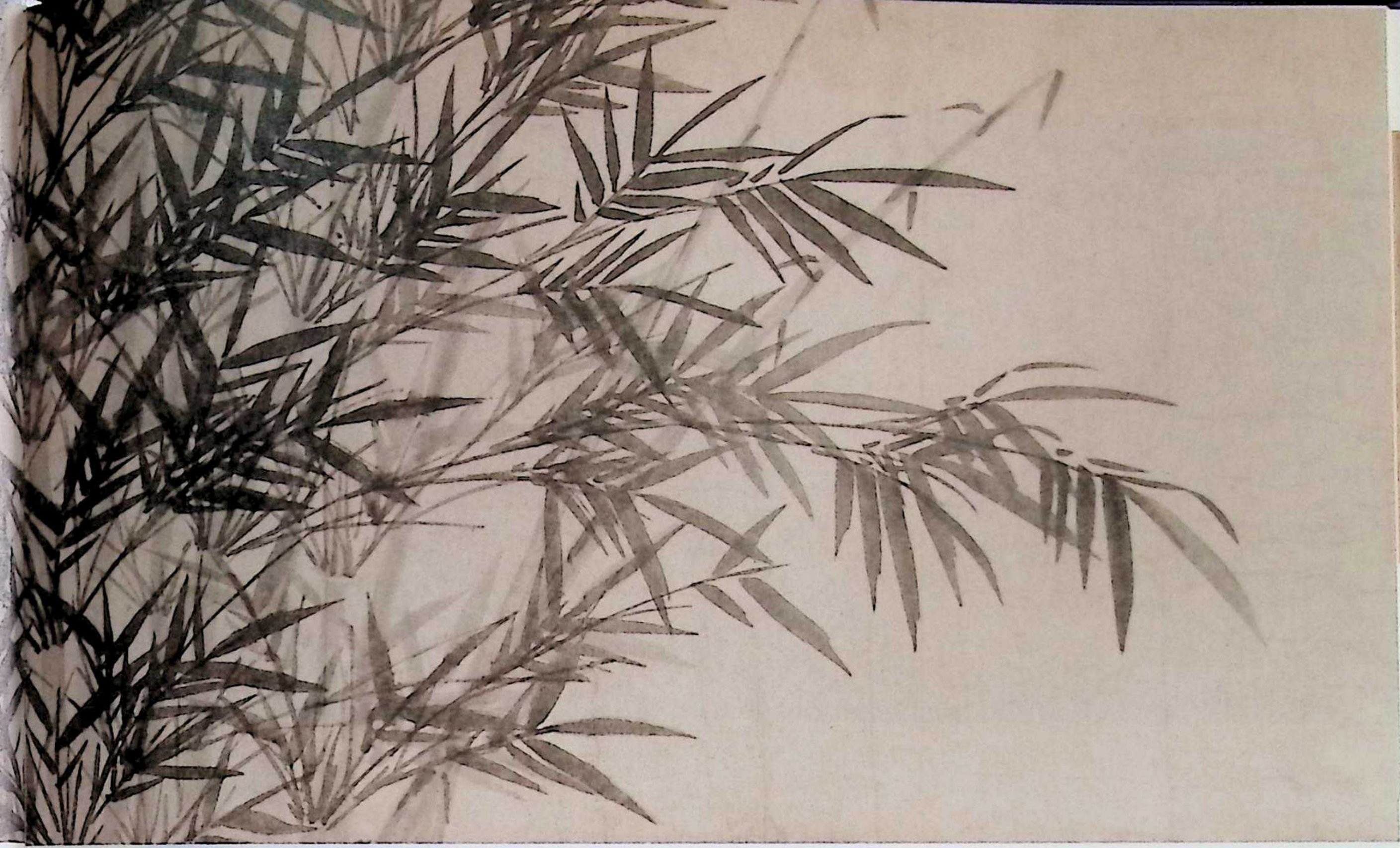
Seen from collector stamps, this scroll was once in the collections of Liang Qingbiao and Yixin, Prince Gong, among others, and later in the holding of a collector Pang Laichen. It is supposed to be brought into the U.S. during the Republic of China, and then acquired by the Detroit Institute of Arts.



Ink Bamboo
Yuan Dynasty
Li Kan
Ink on Paper
37.47 × 237.49 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

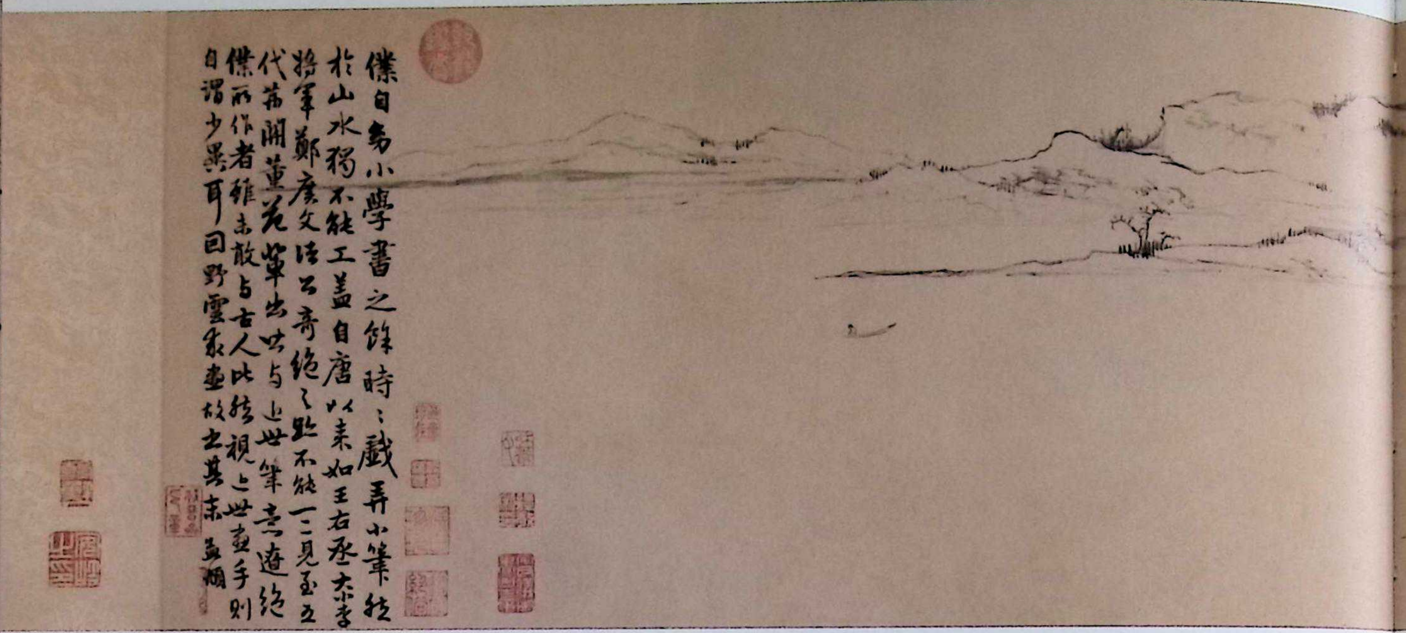
Li Kan (1245-1320) is a renowned painter for his bamboo paintings. In traditional Chinese culture, the bamboo, a favorite of literati painters throughout history, embodies noble virtues and the character of a gentleman. According to records on painting history, Li Kan painted ink bamboos and double-outline colored ones, both can be seen in extant paintings attributed to Li Kan. In addition to painting, Li also wrote the *Book of the Bamboo* which shares his experience in painting bamboos. This book not only documents and differentiates a wide variety of bamboos, but also discusses in detail specific approaches to portraying bamboos in different environments and postures.

This scroll applies wash and ink to portray clusters of bamboos, with the beginning of the scroll only portraying in detail the thickest leaves, while the end of the scroll depicting rocks and bamboo shoots. There is a wide spectrum of ink shades. Although most of today's scholars believe



that the inscriptions of Li Kan were added by a later painter, stamps of collectors of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, including Zhao Mengfu and Liang Qingbiao, suggest that it is supposed to be from a period no later than the Yuan Dynasty. It should be noted that this scroll was split in two in about the mid-Ming Dynasty. The other piece, currently collected in the Palace Museum, is titled *The Four Noble Ones* which portrays the bamboo, orchid, phoenix tree and rock, four objects symbolizing the noble qualities of gentlemen.

According to a presentation by Colin Mackenzie, Senior Curator of East Asian Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, at the 2015 International Seminar on the *Shi Qu Library of Treasured Works*, this scroll was purchased from C. T. Loo, one of the most well-known antique dealers of the 20th century who brought numerous Chinese treasures overseas.


僕自幼小學書之餘時〻戲弄小筆然
於山水獨不能工蓋自唐以來如王右丞大小李
將軍鄭廣文諸公奇絕之跡不能一二見至五
代荊關董范輩出皆與近世筆意遼絕
僕所作者雖未敢與古人比然視近世畫手則
自謂少異耳因野雲求畫故書其末孟頫

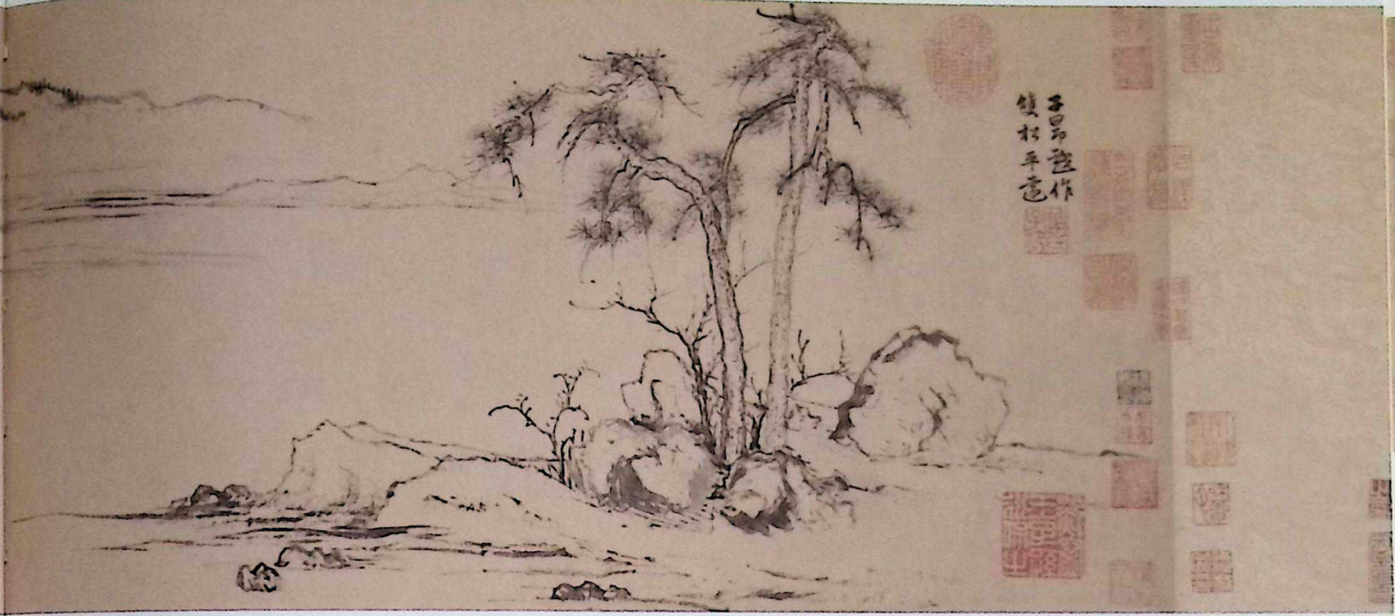
Twin Pines, Level Distance

Yuan Dynasty
ca. 1310
Zhao Mengfu
Ink on Paper
26.8 × 107.5 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322) was a central figure of painting and calligraphy circles in the Yuan Dynasty. His painting theories, including "revivalism" and "paintings and calligraphy in one", and his practices in terms of landscape, figure, and flower-and-bird paintings all had far-reaching impacts on painters of the Yuan Dynasty and down later generations. This *Twin Pines, Level Distance* is touted by scholars as an epitome of his idea of "calligraphy in paintings".

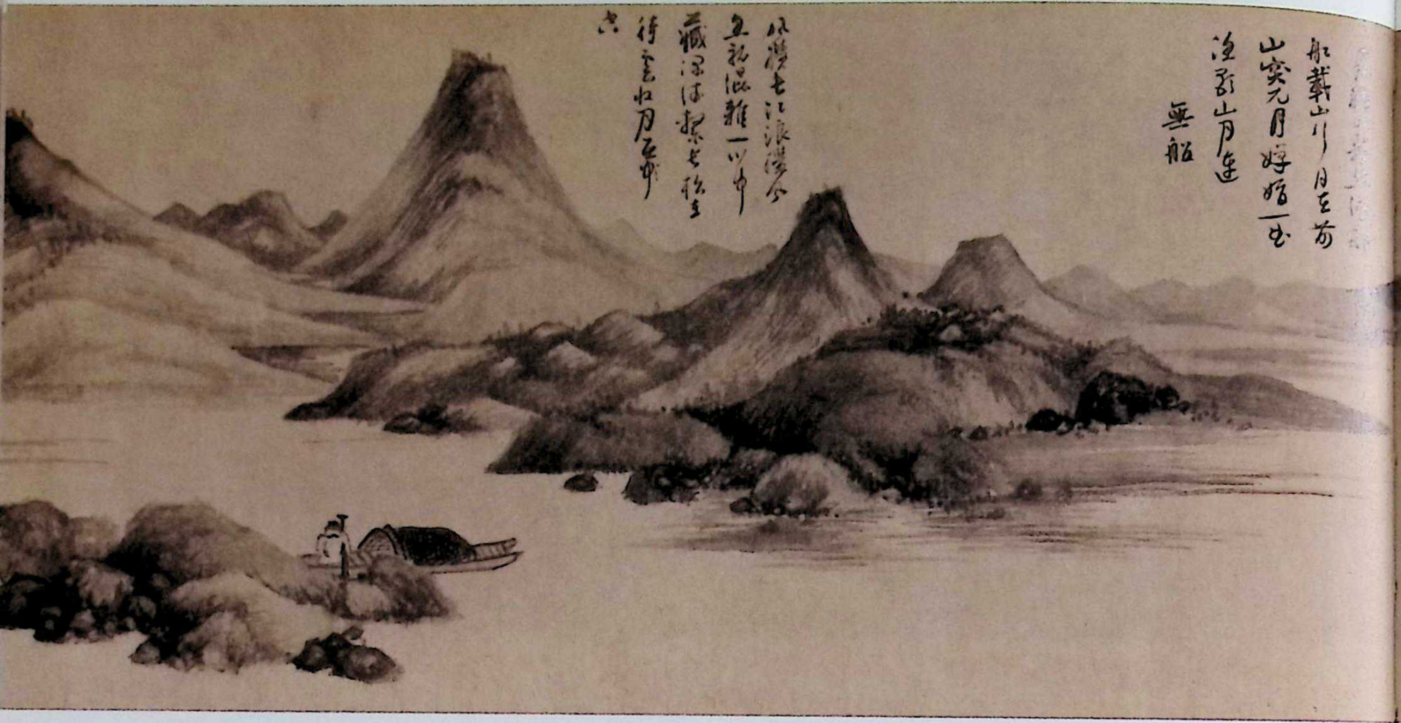
Some scholars argue that this scroll addresses the "wintry forest, level distance" motif put forward by Li Cheng, but Zhao deliberately did it in a horizontal scroll, and reduced the wintry forest to two pines in parallel with the level distance, re-interpreting ancient traditions and images. In terms of specific techniques, Zhao delivered his qualities as a calligrapher by applying cursive strokes to painting. In doing so, he blazed the trail for incorporating calligraphic strokes in paintings by literati painters, effectively putting into practice this pioneering idea of literati painting. Rocks at the beginning of scroll are directly outlined without texturing or shading, blending in the flying white technique in cursive script.

The postscript personally written by the painter reveals his understanding of the trajectory of landscape painting, and expresses his



confidence in placing himself on a par with previous masters. The postscript also says this scroll was commissioned by Yeyun who, based on textual research by Shi Shouqian, is Lian Xishu from the noble Lian family of the Uyghur. Therefore, this scroll gives us a peek into the communications between cultural elites of Han and non-Han ethnic groups, and the role paintings and calligraphy played in it.

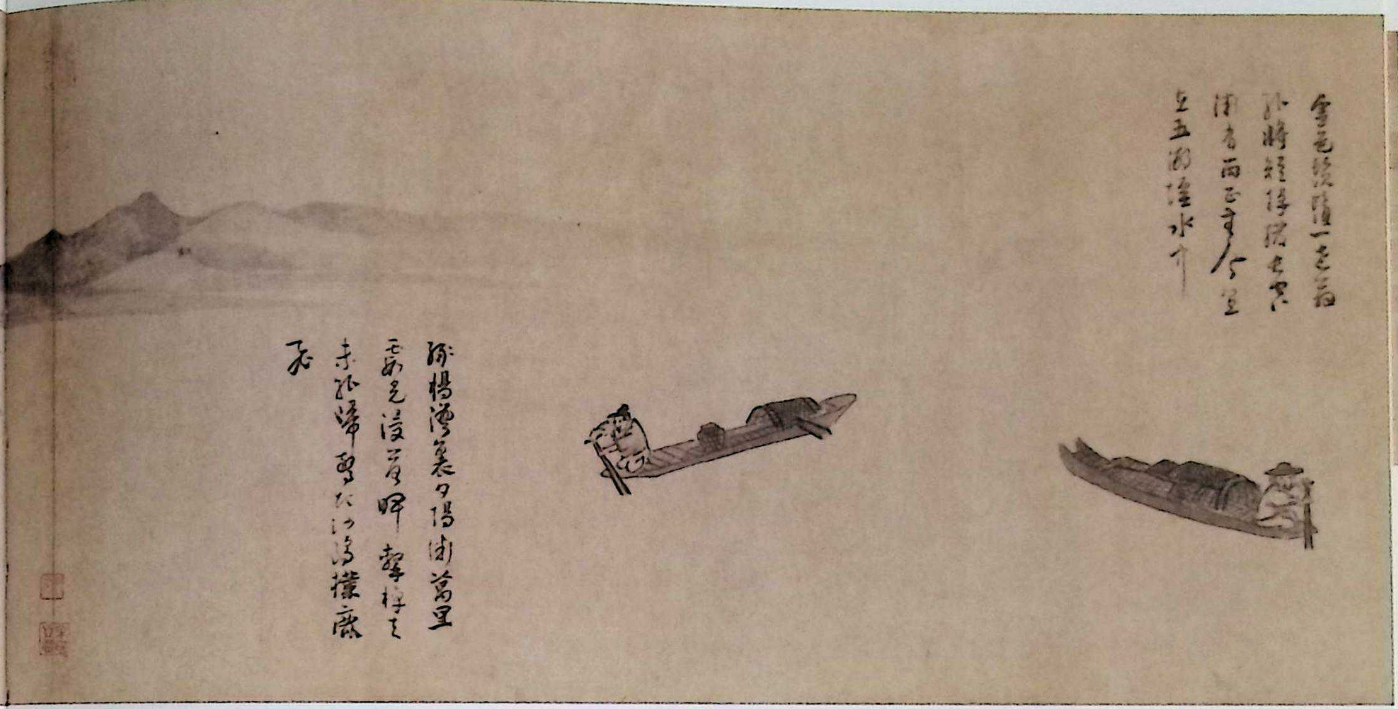
According to postscripts by collectors of the Yuan and Ming dynasties at the end of scroll, it was included in the *A Review of Appealing Ink Works*, later in the holding the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty. It survived interesting twists and turns in modern times. According to the accounts of Zhu Jiajin, Qi Gong, and Xu Bangda, among others, this scroll was held by Duan Fang in the late Qing, acquired by Kuai Guangdian with the *Heavenly Guardian* attributed to Yuchi Yiseng (now collected in the Freer Gallery of Art) in exchange, and later in the holdings of Zhang Renfu, Zhang Heng and Tan Jing. When Tan Jing owned this scroll, he asked Tang An and other painters to copy it, with the copies currently collected in the Cincinnati Art Museum. The original was later sold to Wang Jiqian and donated by The Dillon Found to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1973.



Fishermen, after Jing Hao
Yuan Dynasty
ca. 1341
Wu Zhen
Ink on Paper
32.5 × 565.6 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

In the collections of ancient Chinese paintings across the world, it is not rare that the same painting exists in twins or triplets. Traditional views would identify one as authentic, and the rest faked. In fact, this question is not as simple as it seems. Probably all are authentic or all faked. Moreover, for most early paintings are already lost in oblivion, to acquire a more intuitive understanding, scholars have to rely on copies by later painters after the originals. Thus, even if a piece of work is just a copy, it still has reference value to studies.

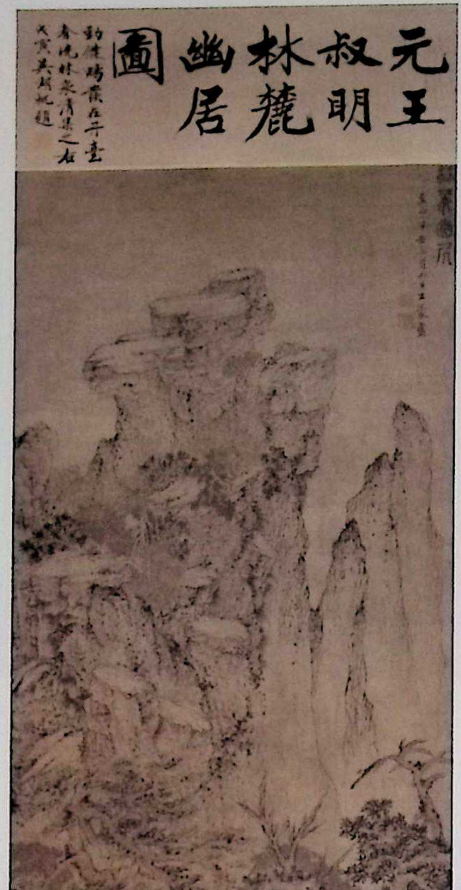
This *Fishermen, after Jing Hao* collected in the Freer Gallery of Art is a case in point. Its "twin brother" is collected in the Shanghai Museum. A comparison of these two *Fishermen's Evening Song* scrolls, both attributed to Wu Zhen (1280-1354), would reveal that their composition and portrayal are very similar. Both scrolls portray a wide expanse of misty river and rolling hills flanking the river. On the river are dozens of small boats carrying fishermen. Plus, both scrolls have *An Old Fisherman* by Liu



Zongyuan and a 16-verse *ci* about fishermen written on it. Further, both portray 15 small boats, though the headcounts of fishermen differ, with the Freer copy having 16 fishermen, two more than the Shanghai Museum copy. Both scrolls contain several postscripts by collectors, though not a single collector appears on both scrolls.

The image of "fisherman", rooted deep in Chinese culture, has become a symbol of prominent hermit in the eyes of literati since the happy-go-lucky fisherman image created by Qu Yuan. Wu Zhen himself was a hermit who loved and excelled in painting the "reclusive fisherman" motif. Scholars have not yet reached a conclusion on the authenticity of these two scrolls.

According to postscripts on this scroll by collectors, from Zhang Ning of the mid-Ming Dynasty to Chen Botao of the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, we can roughly know its trajectory of changes of hands. This scroll was collected in the Freer Gallery of Art in 1937.



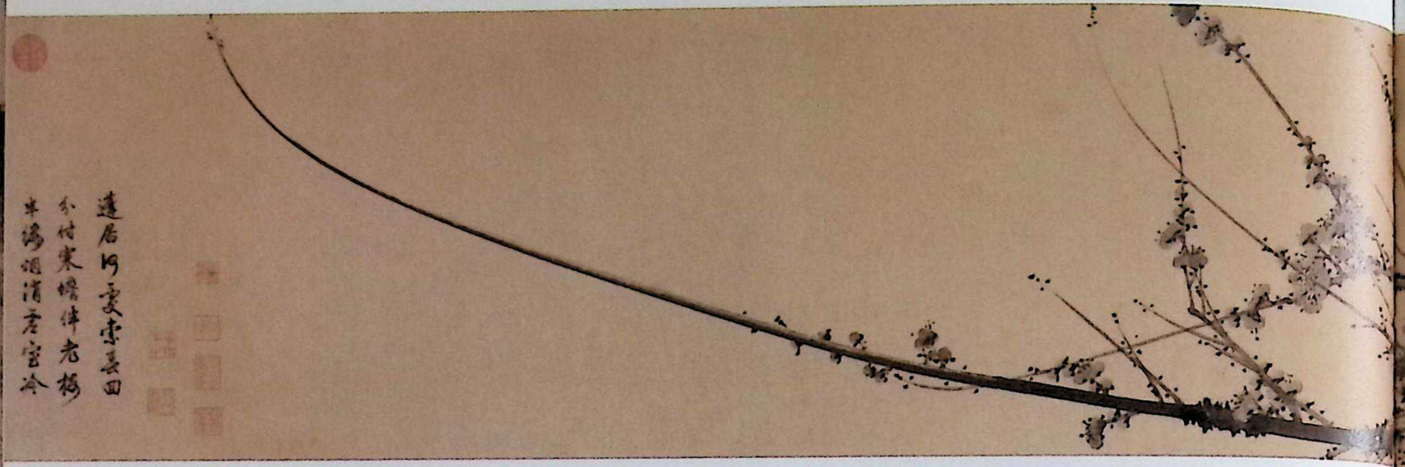
Quiet Life in a Wooded Glen

Yuan Dynasty
1361
Wang Meng
Ink and Color on Paper
177.8 × 64.2 cm
Collected in the Art Institute of Chicago

Ancient Chinese literati "either served the court when in office or retreated into the mountains when out of office." They have always faced the hard choice between "officialdom" and "seclusion" throughout history. Down to the Song and Yuan dynasties, landscape painting evolved to be a vehicle for literati to place and express their desire for a reclusive life, becoming an uncontaminated sphere where scholars and officials could find peace of mind.

Seen from extant paintings by Wang Meng (1308-1385), he liked to address the "seclusion" motif. This scroll is a good example. The upper part of this scroll is occupied by layered peaks, while the lower part by lush woods under which a cottage is half hidden. In the cottage, a scholar sits alone on a bench, accompanied by a *Qin*, books, and two boys in waiting. Such tranquil and peaceful scenes frequently appeared in literati paintings of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The scholar quietly seated in this scroll can be seen as a portrait of literati themselves or their friends. Through this motif, literati painters expressed their innermost desire for living in mountains or along rivers. The mountains and rocks are portrayed by applying "unraveled rope texturing", a technique Wang created himself. This technique was widely embraced by later literati painters. Today's viewers might find it difficult to interpret the cultural aspects conveyed by the portrayal and brushwork of this scroll, but the spiritual depth these symbols convey was undoubtedly shared by the literati community back in history.

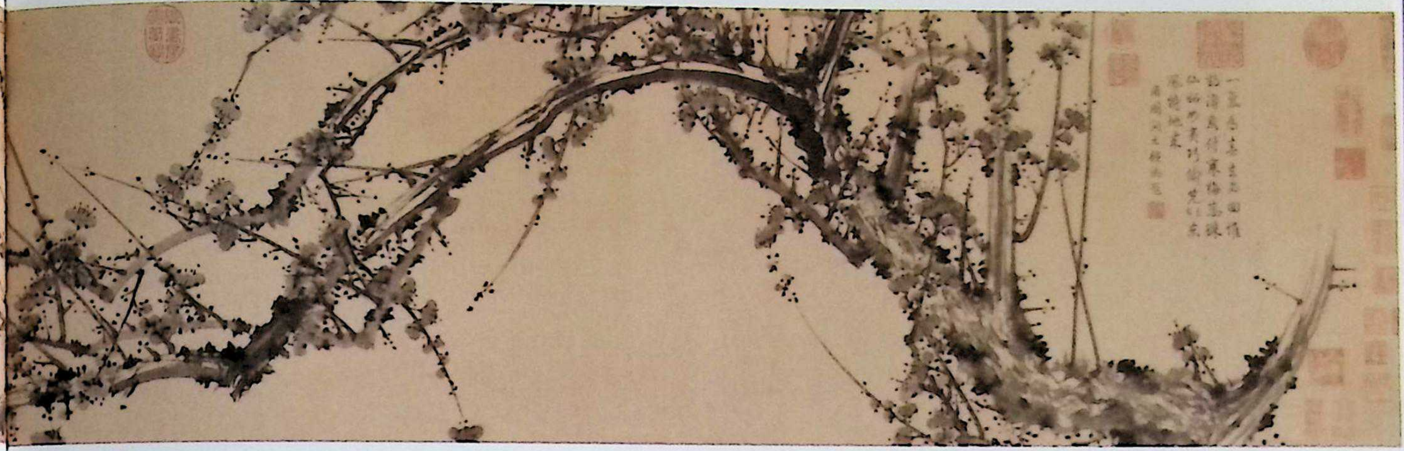
The motif, brushwork and inscriptions all point to its relevance to Wang Meng. Wang Jiqian and Wu Hufan also believed it to be an authentic piece by Wang Meng. According to the *Diaries from a Humble Studio* by Wu Hufan, in 1939, Wang Jiqian brought along a painting attributed to Wang Meng he had newly acquired to the Wu's for appraisal purposes. The timing coincides with the date of the postscript by Wu on this scroll. Thus, the said painting acquired by Wang Jiqian is supposed to be this scroll. This scroll was acquired by the Art Institute of Chicago in 1947.



A Breath of Spring
Yuan Dynasty
1360
Zou Fulei
Ink on Paper
34.1 × 223.1 cm
Collected in the Freer
Gallery of Art

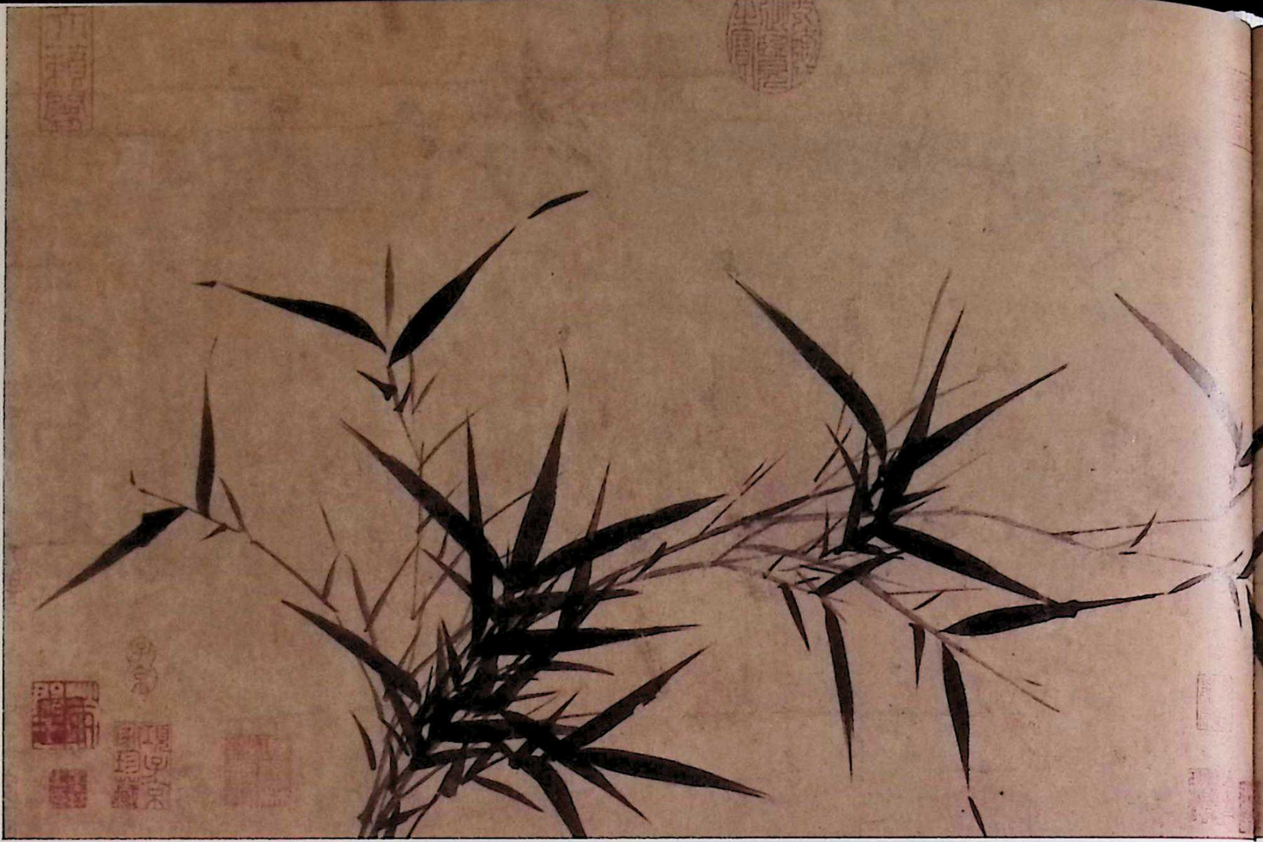
A Breath of Spring is the only painting by Zou Fulei (birth and death years unknown) now in existence. No extant literature documents the biography and stories of Zou. Except for this scroll and the accompanying postscripts by his friend which disclose a little bit about this man, we know virtually nothing about him. Accordingly, this scroll is the only evidence that Zou Fulei did exist in history.

According to the plum tree portrayed and preface and postscripts, Zou was a Taoist priest of the Yuan Dynasty. He named his study Poor Man's House. Zou excelled in drawing the plum blossom, while Zou Fuyuan, his elder brother and also a Taoist priest, was good at painting the bamboo. This scroll opens with an old plum tree full of blossoms portrayed with light and dark ink dots and blots, while the trunk and branches are in calligraphic texture strokes with flying white. This reflects the painter's initiative in applying calligraphic strokes to painting. The twig on the tip of the tree is done with a single stroke, slanting out towards the end of scroll, which in addition to adding a touch of strangeness, conveys the amazing craftsmanship of the Creator, an aspect Taoist painters are happy to present. There is a poem handwritten by the painter at the end of scroll. The verse "A plum tree overshadows the



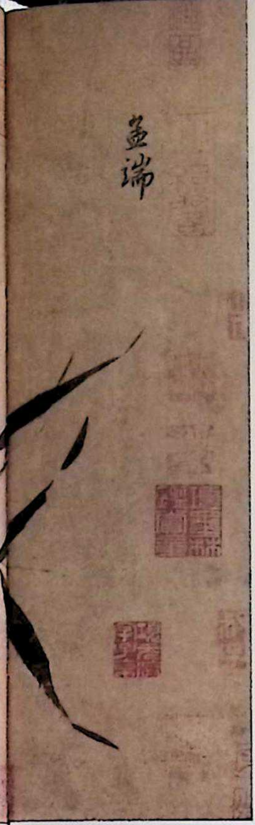
window like ink marks" reveals that the painter consciously compares himself with Huaguang, a Buddhist monk of the Northern Song Dynasty. Legends have it that this monk was the first man who painted plum blossoms. On a moonlit night, Huaguang saw his window covered by the shadow of plum blossoms right outside of the room, and had the whim of painting its lovely shapes with a brush. Zou Fulei proactively placed himself on a par with predecessors who painted plum blossoms. Moreover, the postscript by Yang Weizhen, a leading man of letters in the late Yuan Dynasty, at the end of scroll emphasizes this point again. This postscript Yang wrote in cursive script reflects his signature wildness, queerness, neatness, and strength, obviously making this piece of work more important.

This scroll was once held by Bian Yongyu and An Qi, among others, and later in the holding of the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty when Emperor Qianlong wrote a poem at the beginning of scroll. It was bestowed to Miao Jiahui (style name: Suyun) by Empress Dowager Cixi in the late Qing Dynasty, and acquired by Guo Baochang in 1914 before it ended up in the U.S.



Spray of Bamboo

Ming Dynasty
Wang Fu
Ink on Paper
30.8 × 54.9 cm
Collected in the Harvard Art Museums

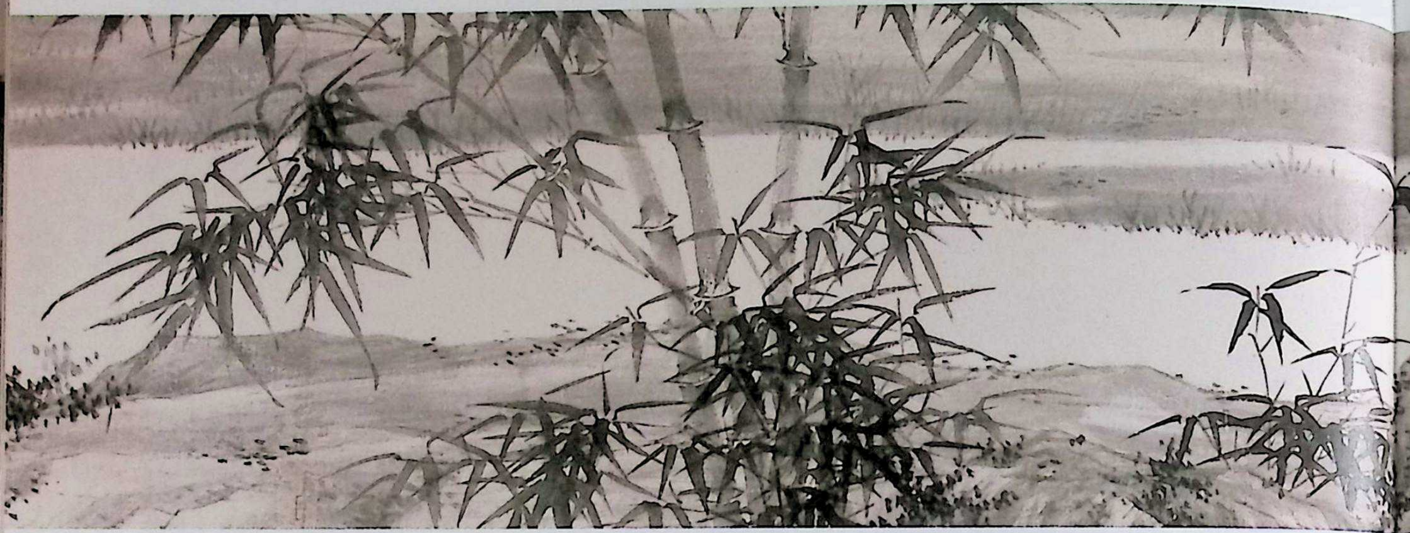


The signature "Meng Duan", style name of Wang Fu (1362-1416), on the upper right corner of this painting suggests that it is supposed to be painted by Wang. Wang Fu, living in the late Yuan Dynasty, was revered as an ancestor of Wu School in Chinese painting history. However, he was not a native from Suzhou, instead from the neighboring Wuxi, the hometown of Ni Zan, one of the Four Masters of the Yuan Dynasty, and a star-studded hub of painting art since the late Yuan Dynasty.

Wang once served temporarily as an official, worked at the Pavilion of the Imperial Library for his talent in calligraphy in the early years of Yongle's reign, and later was promoted to the position of Drafter at the Imperial Secretariat. Wang was already a respected learned man when he was alive. In addition to landscapes favored by literati painters, Wang was particularly good at painting bamboos. Wang once painted the *Bamboo and Crane* (collected in the Palace Museum) in collaboration with Bian Jingzhao, a court painter, for which Wang painted the background bamboos and rocks. This painting only portrays several bamboo twigs on a blank canvas, with the branches in lighter ink while the leaves are in darker ink and mostly in single, forceful strokes. With just a few strokes, Wang precisely captured the bends and turns of leaves, and brought the character and spirit of the bamboo to life. No wonder that Wang Fu's ink bamboos earned the reputation of "unparalleled in the Ming Dynasty".

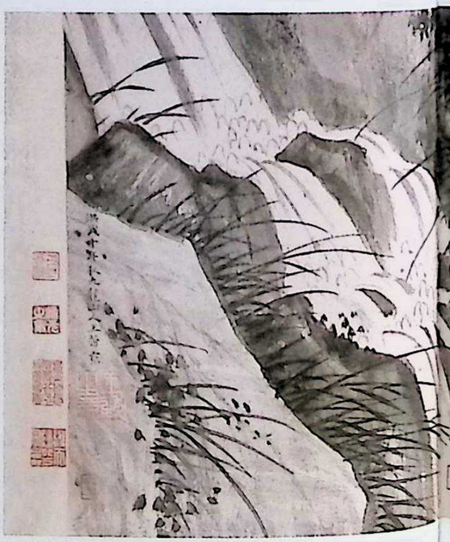
Landscape paintings by Wang Fu, blending in the distinctive features of Ni Zan and Wang Meng, significantly influenced the Wumen School in the mid-Ming Dynasty. Wang Fu rarely drew paintings at the request of others, so there is a poem saying, "The Drafter's bearing dwarfs the rest of contemporaries. His landscape paintings are real luxuries." There are also stories about dignitaries failing to get Wang's paintings as recorded in the *History of the Ming Dynasty: Biography of Wang Fu*.

According to the stamps of collectors and connoisseurs affixed, this painting was once held by Xiang Yuanbian, and later in the holding of the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty. In 1923, it ended up in the Fogg Art Museum (currently known as the Harvard Art Museums).



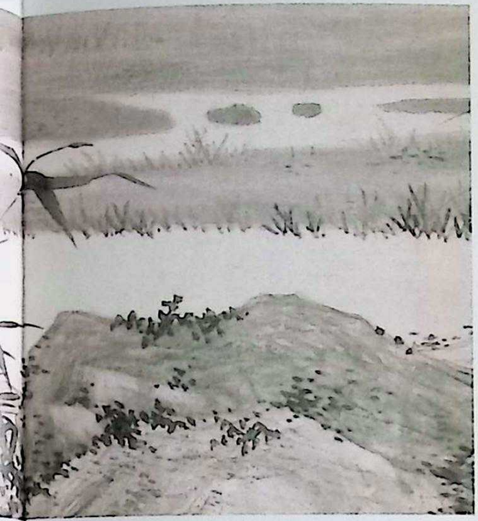
The Serene Bank of the Xiang River

Ming Dynasty
Xia Chang
Ink on Paper
32.1 × 939.2 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art



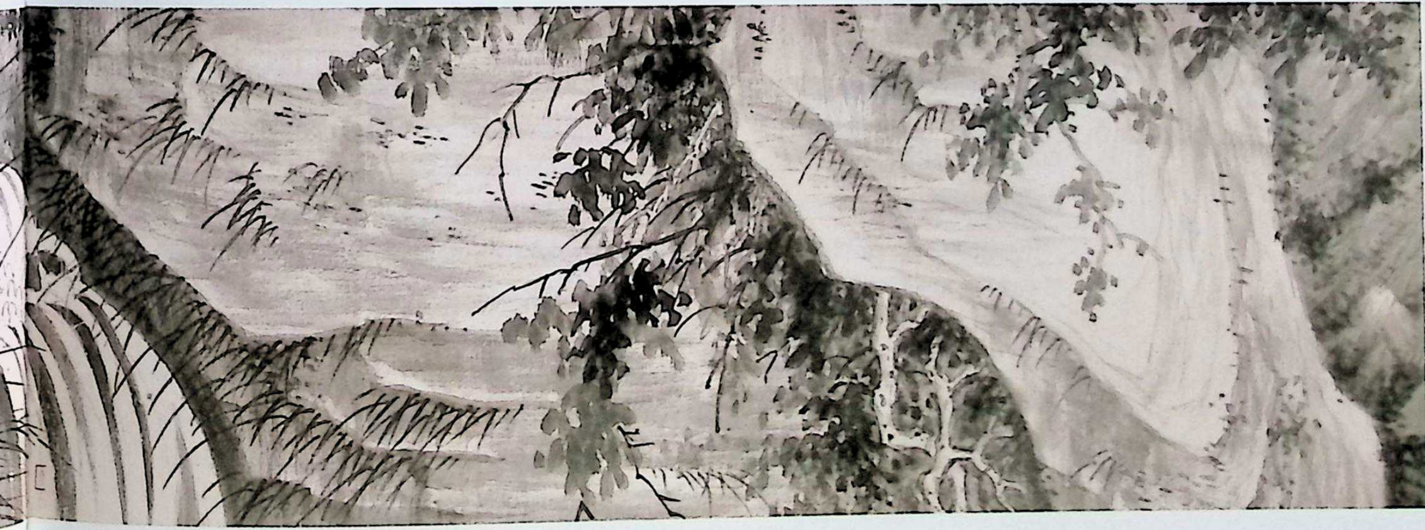
This long scroll portrays the long-winding river banks and shoals and clusters of bamboos growing beside rocks. Long scrolls of bamboo painting appeared at least in the late Yuan Dynasty, such as the *Ink Bamboo* attributed to Li Kan (two pieces, collected in the Palace Museum and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art respectively). An early example of combining bamboos, slopes, rocks, and river banks is the *Bamboo Groves in the Misty Rain* by Guan Daosheng of the Yuan Dynasty (collected in the Taipei Palace Museum). Down to the early Ming Dynasty, Wang Fu and his disciple Xia Chang (1388-1470) inherited and developed this tradition of portraying bamboos.

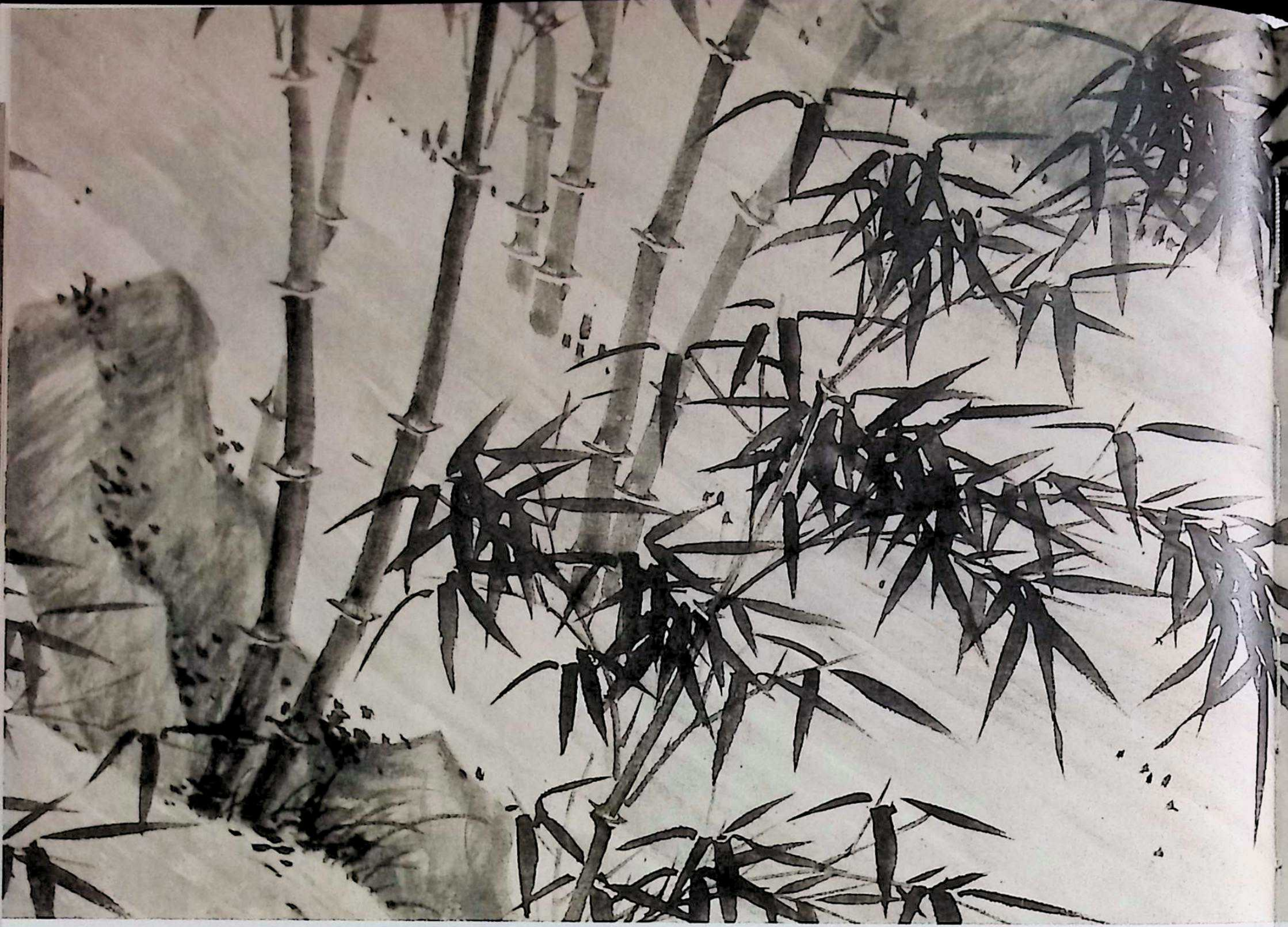
At the end of scroll is inscribed "By Wang Fu, style name Jiulong Shanren, in the autumn of the 10th year under the reign of Hongwu Emperor" in small regular script and affixed the stamp "Seal of Wang



Fu", which suggests that the author should be Wang Fu. However, connoisseur Xu Bangda held a different view. According to Xu's textual research, Wang was born in 1362, the 22nd year under the Zhizheng reign of the Yuan Dynasty, so he was only 16 years old in 1377, the 10th year under the reign of Hongwu Emperor. The mature composition and experienced brushwork of this scroll couldn't have been done by such a teenager. Meanwhile, judging from the brushwork and the *Pines, Bamboos and Rocks Along a Waterfall* by Xia Chang (another scroll with the exactly same brushwork and composition, except for a missing section in the middle of the scroll), this scroll might be a copy after the said piece by Xia Chang. It is not uncommon that ancient painters, at the request of others, painted the same piece over and again. The said inscriptions and stamp attributed to Wu Fu were likely to be added after removing the inscriptions by Xia Chang.

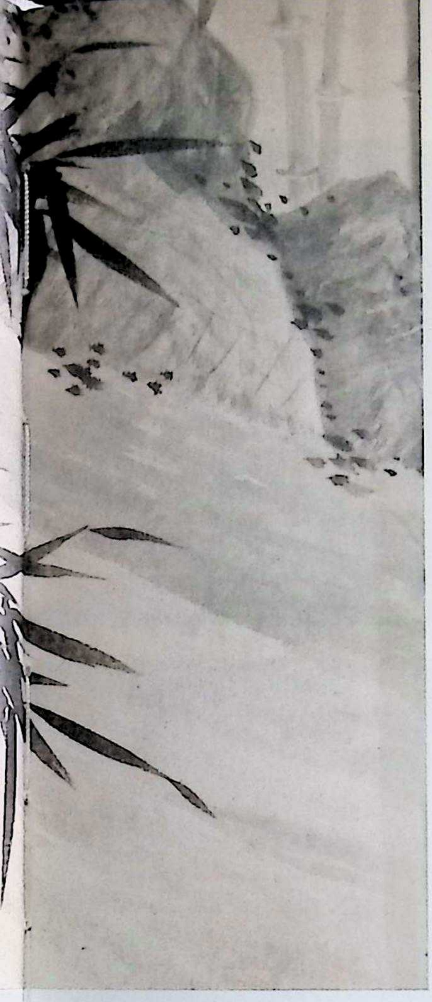
With postscripts by Wang Ao and Fu Han at the end of scroll, this scroll was mentioned in the *Catalogue of Paintings and Calligraphy from Ancient Wu and Yue States*. It was roughly brought overseas during the Republic of China, and later acquired by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.





Ink bamboo paintings were traditionally favored by literati painters, but those obsessed with painting the bamboo like Xia Chang (1388-1470) were rarely seen throughout history. According to statistics, among extant ink works by Xia Chang, except for the *Bodhisattva In a Bamboo Grove* (collected in the Taipei Palace Museum), a figure painting with bamboos as background, all the rest portray ink bamboos. As a result, all his paintings included in painting literature are about ink bamboos.

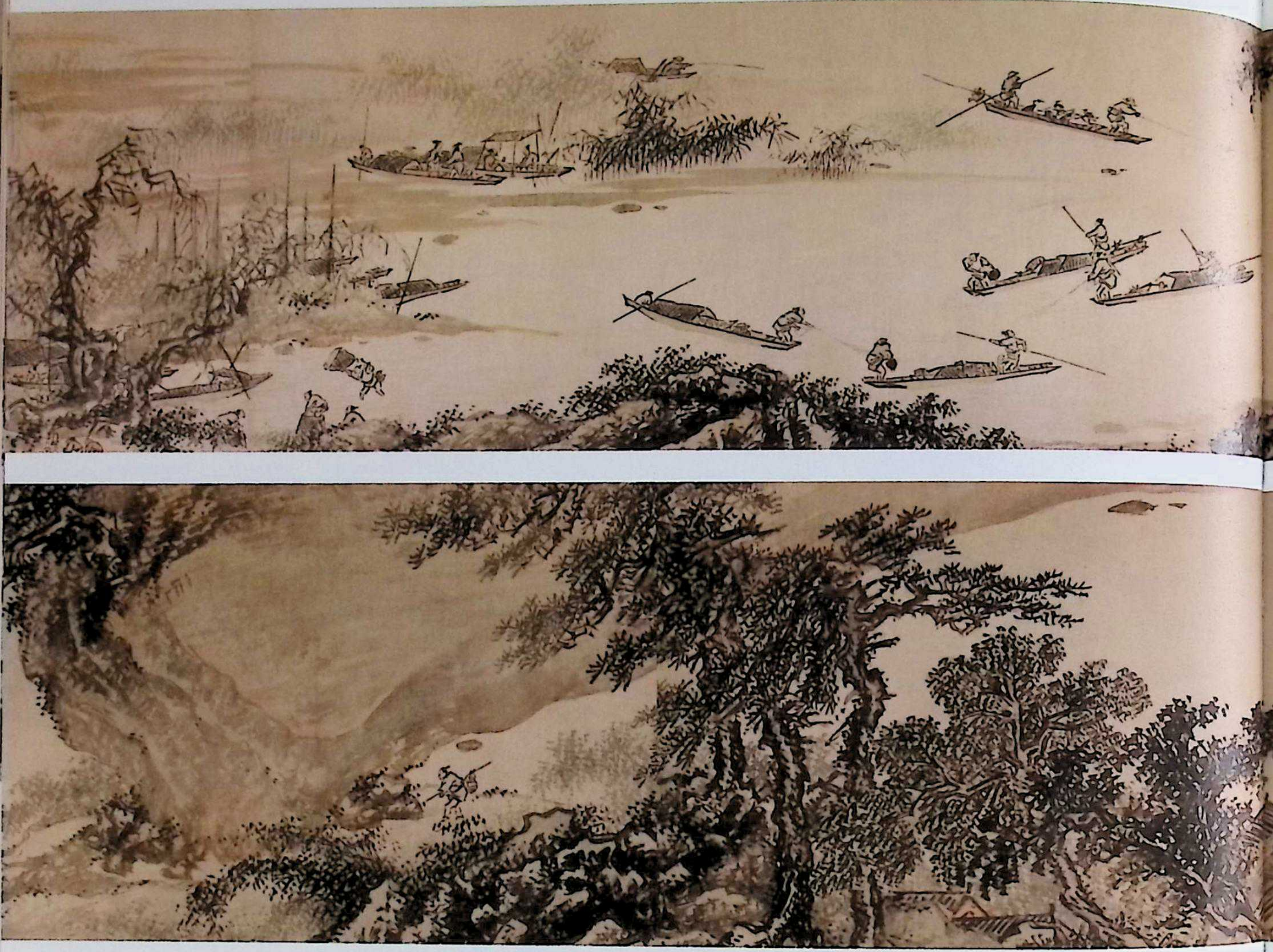
Xia's painting portfolio, as shown in this scroll, consists mostly of long scrolls of ink bamboo, along with such elements as streams, rocks and banks. This arrangement reveals the environment where bamboos grow, and makes the scroll visually rich and more enjoyable. This scroll portrays bamboos in the rain. A review of Xia's works would reveal that "spring rain" and "wind and rain" are two images often seen, as in the *Xiang River in*



Bamboo-Covered Stream in Spring Rain
Ming Dynasty
1441
Xia Chang
Ink on Paper
41.3 × 1500 cm
Collected in the Art Institute of Chicago

the Wind and Rain collected in the Palace Museum and the *Xiang River in the Spring Rain* collected in the Museum of Asian Art, Berlin. How exactly is "rain" addressed in Xia's paintings? If one looks at this scroll closely, one would see that most of the bamboo leaves are slightly drooping, which is due to leaves being weighted down by the rain. The painter suggests the weather via this detail. The mild brushwork and the dominance of wet strokes add to the moist effect. We can see the painter's attention to detail and subtle craftsmanship in capturing the conditions and circumstances of bamboos.

According to the postscript by Xia Chang himself at the end of scroll, it was commissioned by a friend. This scroll was purchased by the Art Institute of Chicago from C.T. Loo and added to the collections of the museum in 1950.



Fishermen on an Autumn River
Ming Dynasty
Dai Jin
Ink and Color on Paper
46 × 741.7 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

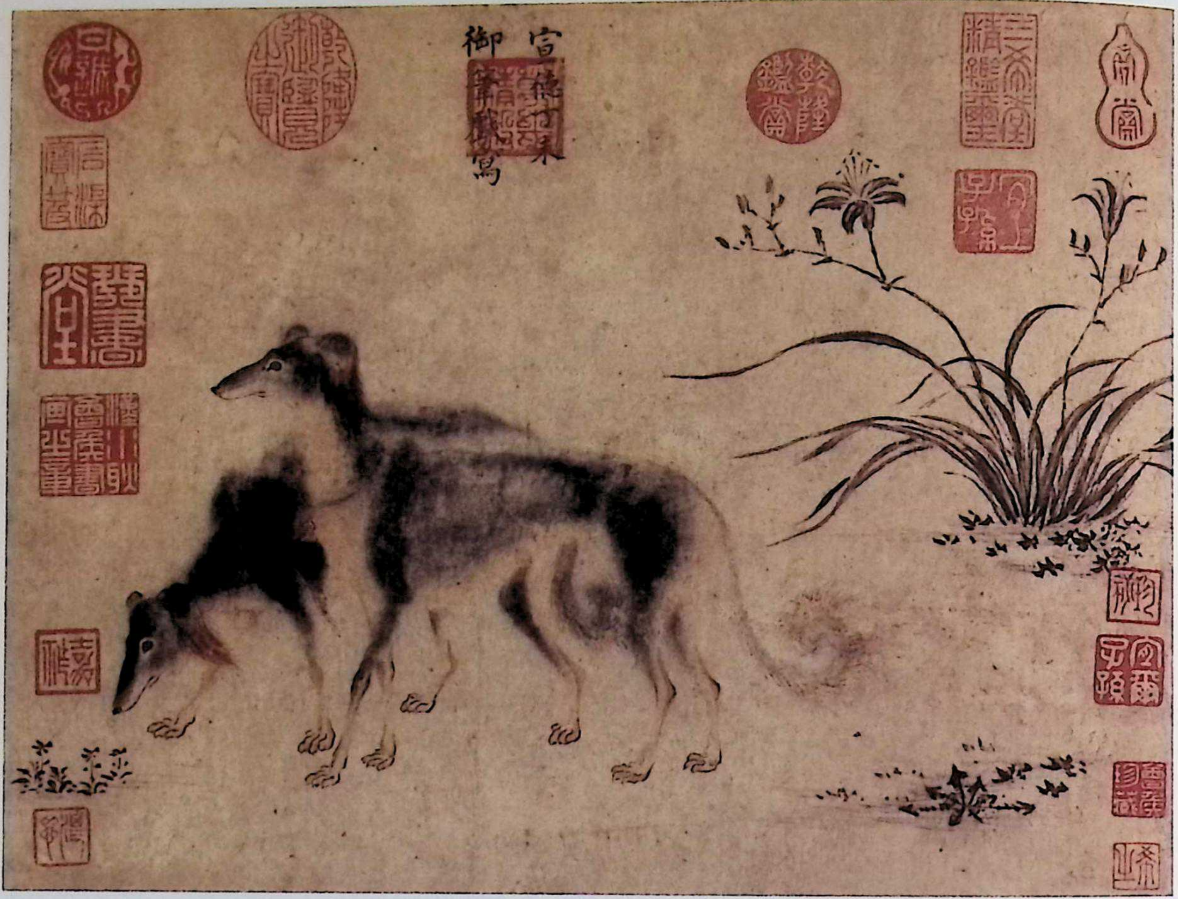
This long scroll portrays fishing boats and fishermen on a river. This motif, according to extant paintings and relevant literature, at least dates back to the Song Dynasty. Examples on this motif include the *Fishermen's Evening Song* by Xu Daoning, a painter of the Northern Song Dynasty, and the *Fishermen, after Jing Hao* by Wu Zhen, a painter of the Yuan Dynasty. This *Fishermen on an Autumn River* by Dai Jin (1388-1462) fittingly echoes this time-honored painting tradition, and can be seen as a new interpretation of this motif in the Ming Dynasty.

Unlike the chilly and desolate imagery and heightened sense of fisherman's solitude portrayed by Xu Daoning or the reclusive, carefree state and strong literati sentiment under the pen of Wu Zhen, this scroll by Dai depicts, in addition to busy fishing activities, the scenes of life in the countryside. The scroll as a whole appears very lively, capturing the boisterous pastoral life quite well.

In terms of composition, it is obvious that Dai inherited and reinvented the format of the *Fishermen, after Jing Hao* by Wu Zhen. Both scrolls portray a river flanked by hills, with rocks and reeds on both banks like curtains on a stage, focusing the eyes of viewers on what the fishermen on the river are doing. However, Dai's work applies a closer perspective, giving a more vivid portrayal of fishing life, while Wu's work portrays men of letters, who just dress like fishermen but are not fishermen in the real sense, meditating on a river. Looking at Dai's scroll closely, we can see fishermen in threes and fours, laboring, chatting, or drinking on the riverside, and in particular fisherwomen, adding a touch of harmony and happiness.

In terms of brushwork, this scroll shows Dai's expertise and skill as a professional painter. The unbridled brushwork and forceful strokes reflect the painter's effortless proficiency. The entire scroll exudes a touch of unfettered even unruly spirit. It was probably a fine piece of work created by Dai at a mature stage.

This scroll was acquired by the Freer Gallery of Art in 1930.



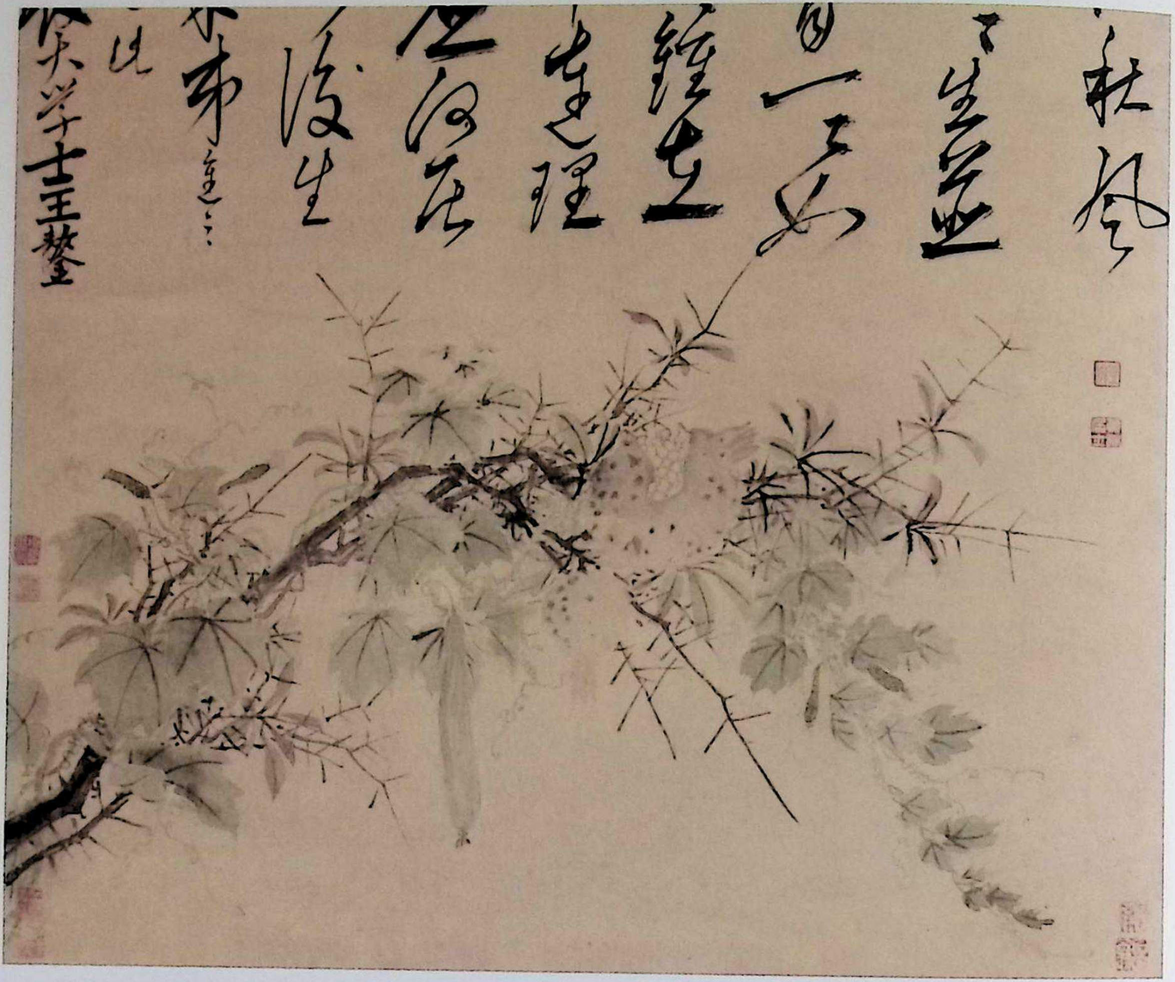
Two Saluki Hounds

Ming Dynasty
1427
Zhu Zhanji
Ink and Slight Color on Paper
26.2 × 34.6 cm
Collected in the Harvard Art Museums

There is no lack of emperors good at painting throughout Chinese history. Zhao Ji, Emperor Huizong of the Northern Song Dynasty, is a good example. Zhu Zhanji (1399-1435), Emperor Xuanzong of the Ming Dynasty, was also fond of painting. According to literature, Zhu Zhanji would like to paint in his spare time and bestow his paintings to subjects. Seen from his paintings, Emperor Xuanzong primarily painted flowers, birds, grasses, insects, and animals.

Zhu Zhanji excelled in painting dogs. This *Two Saluki Hounds* portrays the Chinese greyhound, one of the oldest hunting dogs in China. This painting portrays two hounds, as protagonists, one raising its head up as if looking out, the other lowering its head down as if sniffing, excellently showing the alertness and agility of hunting dogs. The painter focuses on these dogs against a background of several little grasses in front of them and a day lily behind, which indicate the environment and spatial layout. In specific portrayal, this painting combines boneless, outline and texturing techniques: The bodies of hounds are shaded with big blots of ink. The heads, paws, knuckles, and other locations are outlined in ink strokes. Finally, light ink with dry brush and colors are applied partially to highlight the texture of skin and hair. In addition to this piece, there are other paintings about dogs attributed to Emperor Xuanzong, including the *Dog and Bamboo* (collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art) and *Two Frolicking Hounds* (in private collection).

On the top of this painting is inscribed "Parodied by the Emperor in the second year of the Yuande reign" in regular script and affixed with an embossed stamp which literally means "Not Busy of a Myriad of State Affairs". Seen from the collector stamps, this painting was once in the hands of Zhu Zhichi and Geng Zhaozhong, among others, and later collected in the Imperial Storehouse of the Qing Dynasty, a trajectory quite uneventful. This painting was acquired by the Fogg Art Museum in 1931.



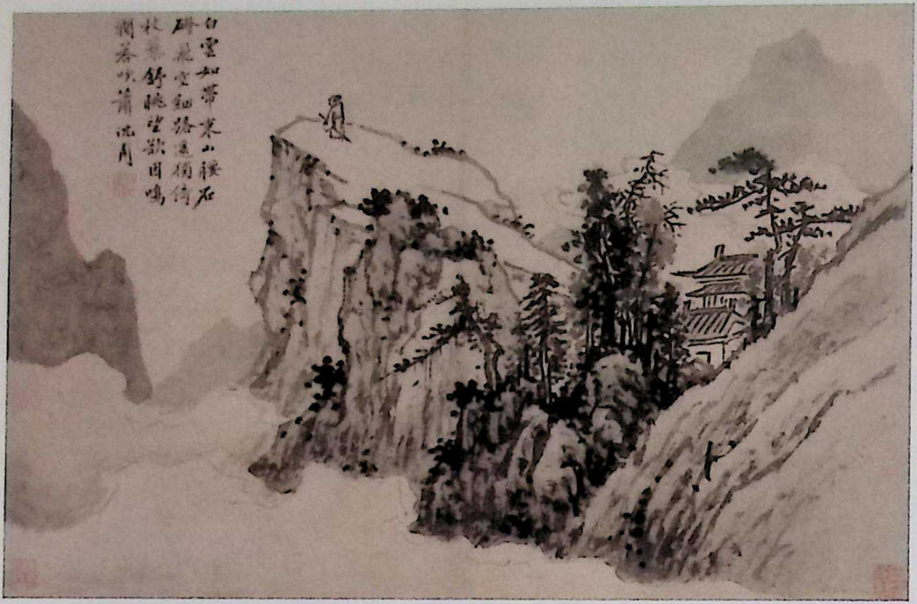
Ode to Pomegranate and Melon Vine

Ming Dynasty
ca. 1506 to 1509
Shen Zhou (painting), Wang Ao (calligraphy)
Ink and Color on Paper
280.7 × 104.1 cm
Collected in the Detroit Institute of Arts

This *Ode to Pomegranate and Melon Vine*, though without inscriptions, is affixed with two stamps, i.e., "Qinan" and "Baishiweng", suggesting that it was a painting by Shen Zhou (1427-1509). On the canvas, a branch of pomegranate tree slants in from the lower left corner, stretching to the right half of the scroll. In the middle are two pomegranates, one of which is big and ripe, laden with seeds at its cracked opening. There is a vine of sponge gourd hanging on the branch, full of fruits, some ripe, some not. The branches and twigs are done in strokes, while the sponge gourd and pomegranate in boneless brushwork, with light colors. The objects painted by Shen only take up a third of the space on the lower half of scroll. The upper half is an ode written by Wang Ao (1450-1524) in cursive script. Wang, one generation younger than Shen and also from Wuxian County, held various offices up to Minister of Revenue and Grand Secretary of the Pavilion of the Imperial Library. Tang Yin spoke highly of Wang, saying Wang Ao is "beyond compare both in writing and as a retired prime minister." What was the opportunity that gave birth to this joint artwork by Shen, a leader of the Wu School and Wang, an accomplished writer and calligrapher?

The answer is implied in what are portrayed by Shen and the preface by Wang. Pomegranate is regarded as a symbol of fertility and prosperity due to its many seeds when it bursts open. As for the sponge gourd, there is a line "spreading melon vines" in the *Book of Songs*, implying prosperous descendants. In the preface by Wang, he repeatedly described fruitful pomegranate and vines laden with melons. There is even a verse saying "May thy offspring flourish and prosper like ripe pomegranate and sponge gourd." It can be inferred that this piece about melons and vines winding up a pomegranate tree was commissioned to celebrate the birthday and pray for more sons for the recipient.

According to the stamps affixed by collectors and connoisseurs, this painting was in the hands of Liang Qingbiao and later Zhu Wenjun during the Republic of China. The *Catalogue of Calligraphy, Paintings and Artifacts from the Jiezhi Residence* records that this painting was once hung on the eastern gable wall of the main room of Shufangrun, the main courtyard of his family residence. Later, it ended up in the U.S. and was acquired by the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1940.

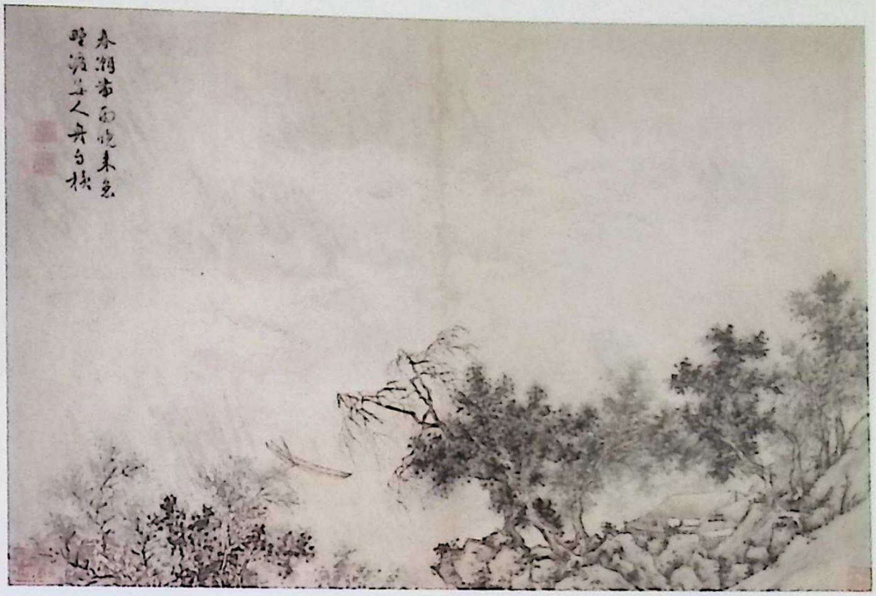

白雲如帶束山腰
石磴飛空細路遙
獨倚杖藜舒眺望
欲因鳴澗答吹簫
沈周

Poet on a Mountain Top
Ming Dynasty
Shen Zhou
Ink on Paper
38.74 × 60.33 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

This hand scroll is an album of six leafs each with a similar size, probably cut uniformly at the time of mounting. The album was initially titled *Combined Album of Paintings from Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming*. According to the postscript by Wen Zhengming (1470-1559), this album originally contained six paintings by Shen, commissioned by Wu Kuan who later asked Wen to add another four, adding up to ten paintings. Today, there are only six ones in existence, including five by Shen and one by Wen. Here, we present two pieces, the *Poet on a Mountain Top* by Shen and the *Storm over the River* by Wen.

The *Poet on a Mountain Top* by Shen portrays a scholar with a walking stick in his hand standing on a clouded cliff, overlooking mountains in the distance. Half way up the mountains, a complex of temple buildings are half hidden in the lush woods. On the upper left corner is a seven-character quatrain written in running script, literally translated as "Clouds wrap around the waist of mountains like a belt. A long narrow trail of stone steps leads up to the mid air. Relaxed and alone, I looked into the distance leaning on my wand. Hearing the murmuring creek, I wanted to echo it with a flute." The poem arguably complements the painting.

The *Storm over the River* by Wen also contains a verse written in running script on its top left corner. It is two lines from the *At Chuzhou on the Western Stream* by Wei Yingwu,

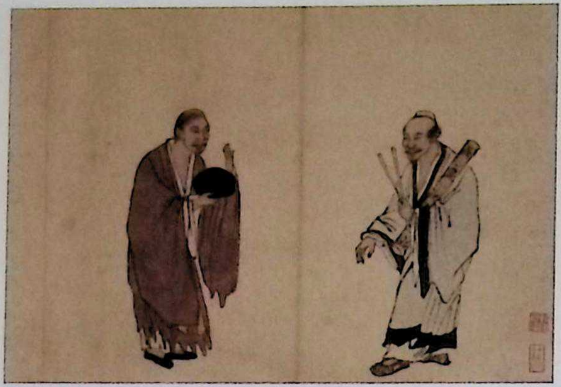


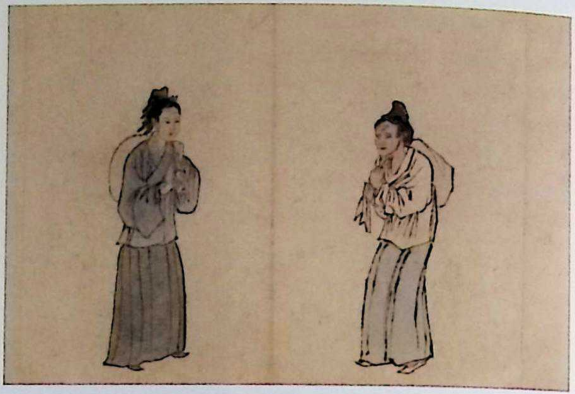
Storm over the River
Ming Dynasty
Wen Zhengming
Ink on Paper
38.74 × 60.01 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art

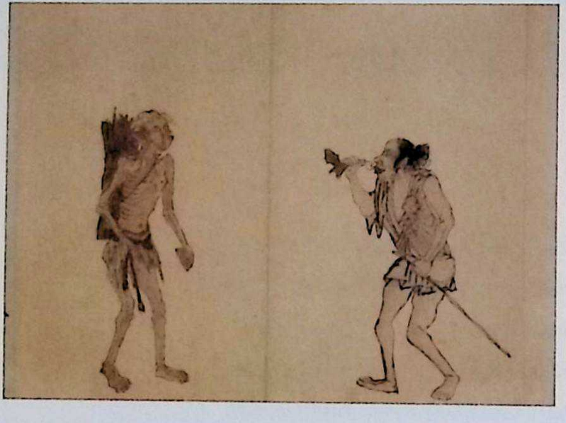
a great poet of the Tang Dynasty: "On the spring flood of last night's rain, the ferry-boat moves as though someone were poling". The painted scene visualizes the poem. The painter outlined the clouds and waters in very light strokes; the soft brushes and shades represent the falling rain, while its slanting angle reveals the presence of wind. This portrayal takes up approximately three-fourths of the space. On the bottom right corner is a sloped bank on which the branches and leaves of trees are bending down, which emphasizes the violence of this storm. On the surface of the stream, an empty boat is afloat amid this stormy weather.

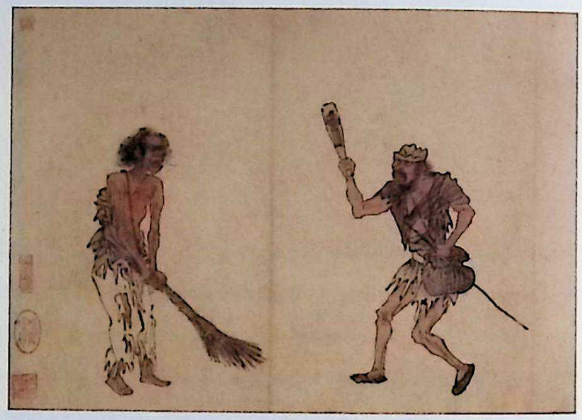
Both paintings are characterized by the combination and echoing of poetry and painting, what literati painters called "poetry, paintings, and calligraphy in one", which is different from what professional painters called "similarities with painting".

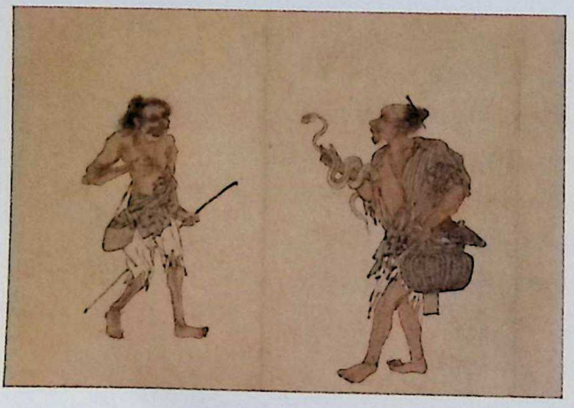
The lower left corner of the *Poet on a Mountain Top* is affixed with the "Collection of Tingfan Tower" stamp, while that of the *Storm over the River* is affixed with the "Collection of Pan Jitong" stamp. It suggests that both pieces were once in the hands of Pan Zhengwei (style name: Jitong; his study named Tingfan Tower) of the late Qing Dynasty. Perhaps, it was Pan who mounted the six pieces of paintings into one scroll.

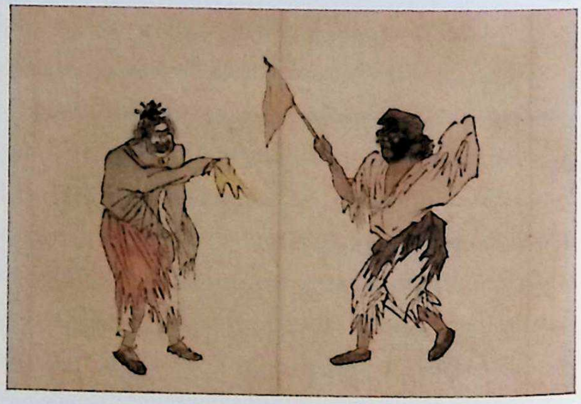












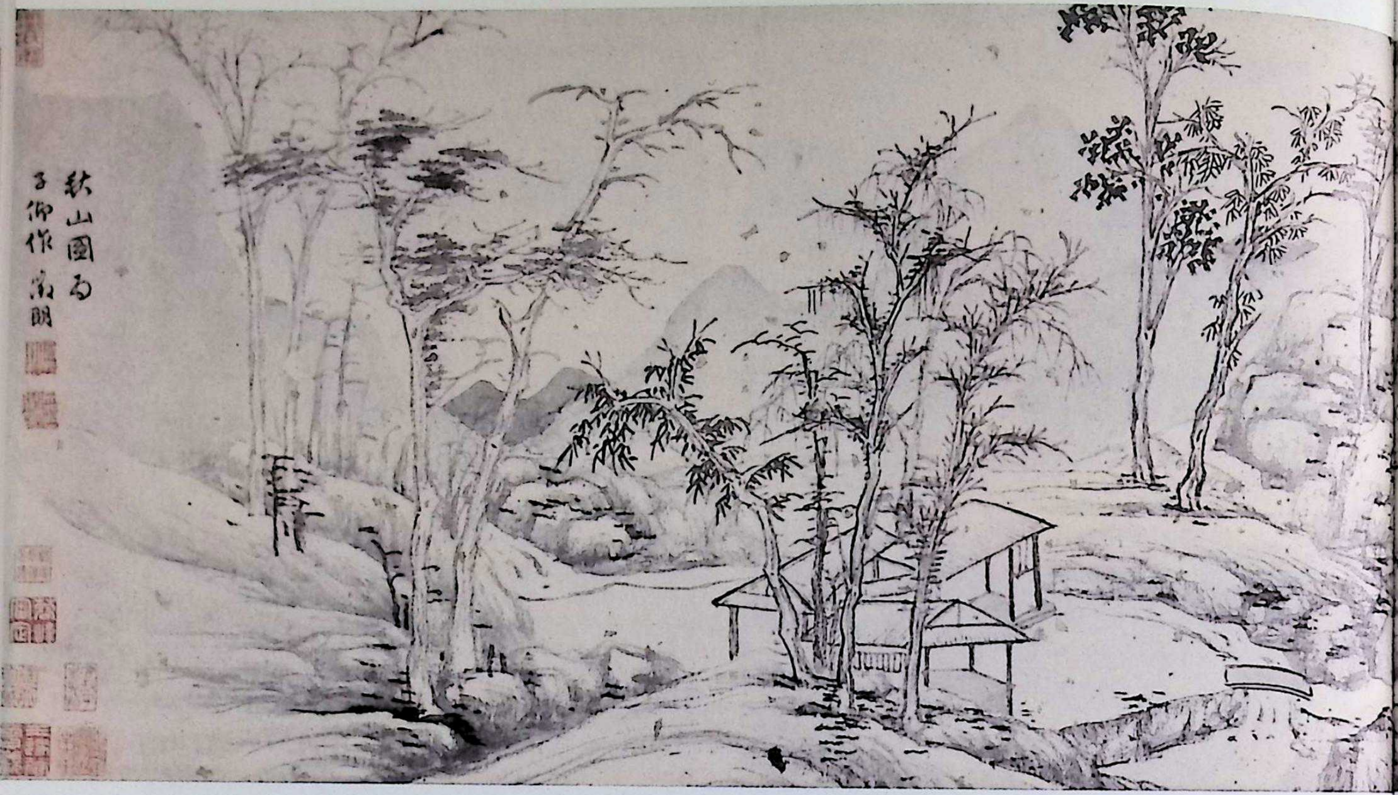
Beggars and Street Characters

Ming Dynasty
1516
Zhou Chen
Ink and Color on Paper
31.4 × 245.3 cm
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

The creation of the *Beggars and Street Characters* scroll was initiated by Zheng Xia of the Northern Song Dynasty. According to literature, in order to admonish Emperor Shenzong, Zheng painted a long scroll of dislocated, starved people he saw on a daily basis to present it to the emperor. Unfortunately, Zheng's original painting was lost, so we do not know what it was like. This scroll by Zhou Chen (1460-1535) is probably a continuity of this tradition. In the postscript at the end of scroll, Zhou also mentioned "it helps stir awareness of poverty and sufferings," which allows a peek into the painter's attitude at the time of creating this scroll. Although it is now a handscroll, it was originally an album portraying 24 human figures. Later, during the reign of Emperor Daoguang, this album was divided and re-mounted into two handscrolls, each containing 12 figures. This scroll collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art is the first half, while the second half is collected in the Cleveland Museum of Art. At the beginning of scroll, there are four Chinese characters, literally meaning "Impromptu Ink Paintings in the East Village", written by Qi Yanhuai, a scholar of the Qing Dynasty. At the end of the scroll, there are remarks by Zhou Chen added by Deng Erya and postscripts by Wen Jia and others.

Zhou Chen, teacher of Tang Yin, is known for his landscape paintings. Seen from this scroll, his figure paintings are no less brilliant. The entire scroll has no background portrayal, instead depicts pairs of figures facing each other with matched postures. However, the viewers can still perceive the presence of space. This scroll has fluid brushwork, archaic colors, and, in particular, vivid facial expressions.

This scroll was brought to the U.S. during the Republic of China, later purchased by Mrs. Carter Galt from Walter Hochstadter, a famous Jewish art collector and dealer, and donated to the Honolulu Museum of Art in 1956.

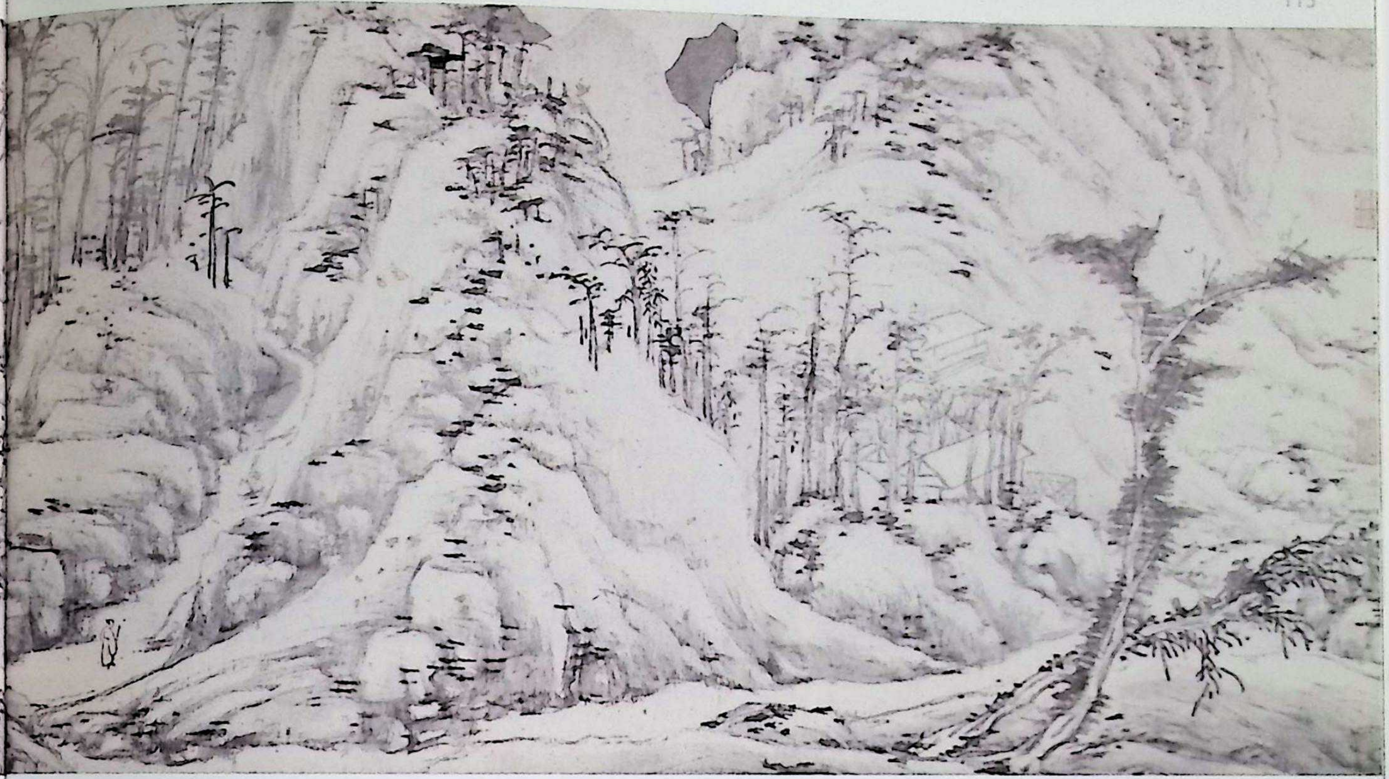


Autumn Mountains

Ming Dynasty
Wen Zhengming
Ink on Gilded Paper
31.8 × 120.8 cm
Collected in the Art Institute of Chicago

According to inscriptions by Wen Zhengming at the end of the scroll, this painting portrays autumnal mountains. Wen did not apply colors customarily used by career painters for depicting autumn mountains to this scroll. This ink-on-gilded-paper piece is undoubtedly more in line with the taste of literati painters, accordingly more easily embraced by the literati community.

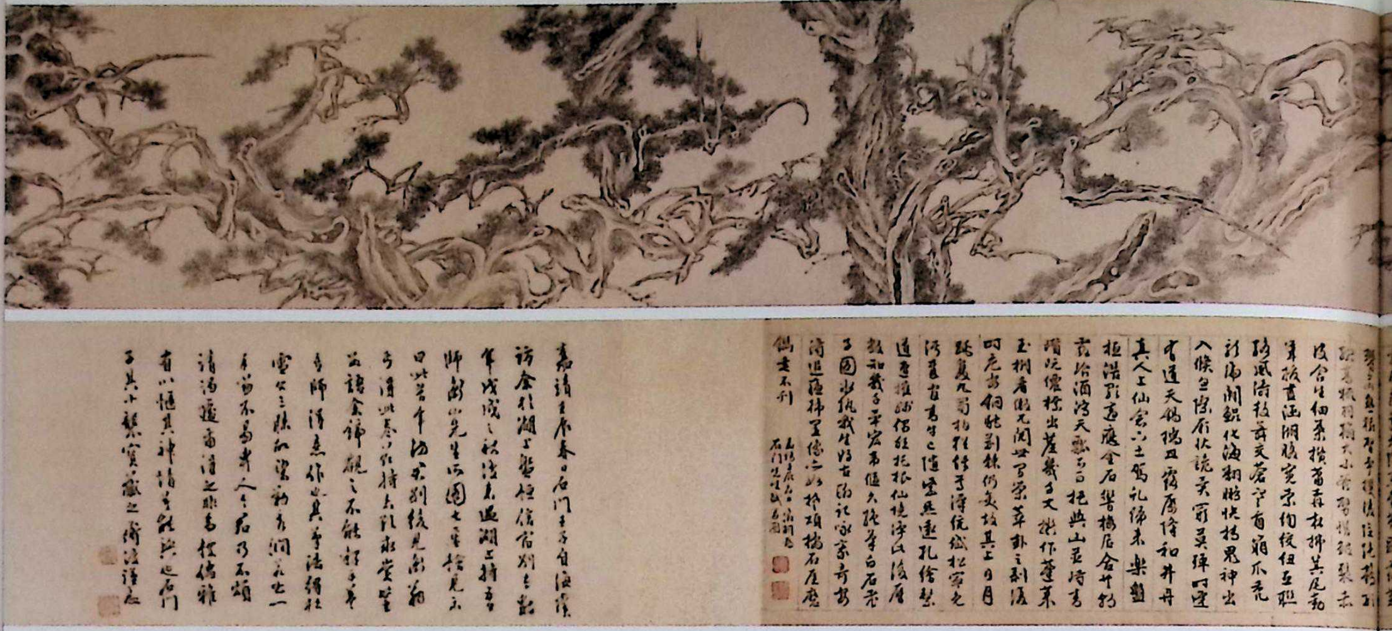
This scroll, with a cross section-based composition, portrays hills covered with towering trees under which are several half hidden cottages. At the foothills is a murmuring creek. A scholar, having crossed a bridge, is trekking on a steep trail holding a walking stick. It is not narrative painting, and it doesn't focus on details. Instead, it outlines and depicts the components with simple, light brushwork. Both its portrayal of rocks and trees and the imagery it creates have traces of Ni Zan, a literati painter of the Yuan Dynasty. The rocks are portrayed in folded belt texture strokes, while the trees and pavilions shaped by a few strokes. These are typical



components of paintings by Ni Zan. The entire scene looks desolate, silent and solitary, quite like the tone of Ni's paintings. This scroll also captures the withered plants and chilly desolation in the autumn.

The "Autumn Mountains" at the beginning of scroll was written by Xu Lin who, like Wen Zhengming, was a scholar from the former State of Wu region. Xu excelled in painting landscape and flower paintings, and was proficient in seal engraving, as shown by these two ancient, round and forceful characters in seal script. There is a post-scroll poem written by a contemporary of Wen to supplement and explain the painting. Seen from stamps affixed by collectors and connoisseurs, like the "Reviewed by Rongfeng" stamp, it was once in the hands of Liu Shu (style name: Rongfeng) who, also from Suzhou, was fond of painting and an early owner of today's Lingering Garden of Suzhou, formerly known as Hanbi Villa.

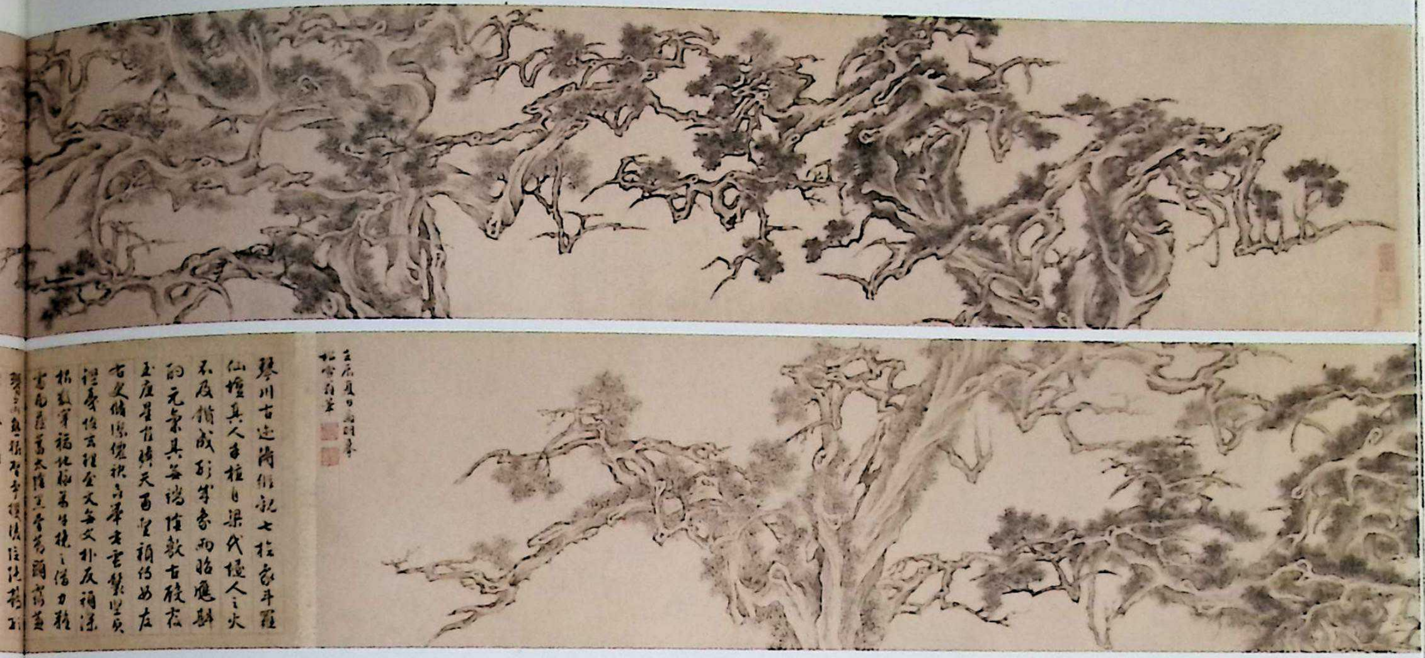
This scroll was collected in the Art Institute of Chicago in 1948.



The Seven Junipers
Ming Dynasty
1532
Wen Zhengming
Ink on Paper
29.3 × 988.5 cm
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

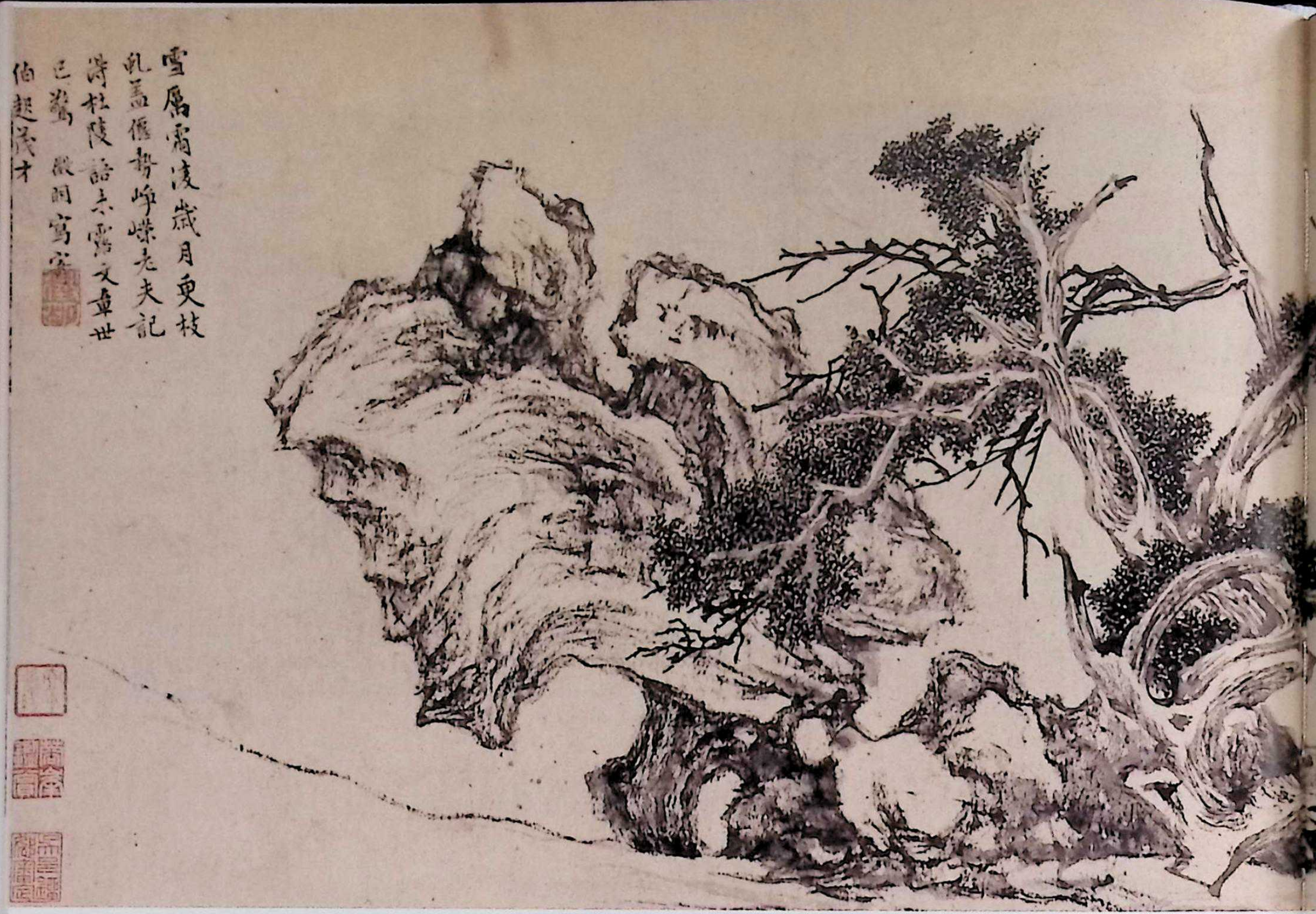
There are inscriptions by Wen Zhengming, i.e., "By Zhengming, after Songxue, in the summer of 1532" (Songxue: a pseudonym of Zhao Mengfu), at the end of the scroll, followed by a long ode by the painter himself and a postscript by Chen Chun. The postscript reveals that this scroll portrays seven old Chinese junipers in the Zhidao Temple which, located in Yushan Mountain (in today's Changshu, Jiangsu Province), was first built in the Liang Dynasty (502-557). The seven junipers in this temple were said to be planted by Zhang Daoyu, founder of the temple, and only had three left by the Ming Dynasty. The other four junipers were later planted in the Song Dynasty. They are exactly the seven junipers Wen portrayed and written about in this scroll. Interestingly, Shen Zhou, another leading painter of the Wu School and several generations older than Wen, also created a painting-and-calligraphy scroll about these seven junipers, which was reflected in poems respectively by a hermit Zhang Yuan and a scholar Deng Fu, both from the Wu area.

The *Old Juniper Trees at Yushan* by Shen Zhou, created in 1484, was



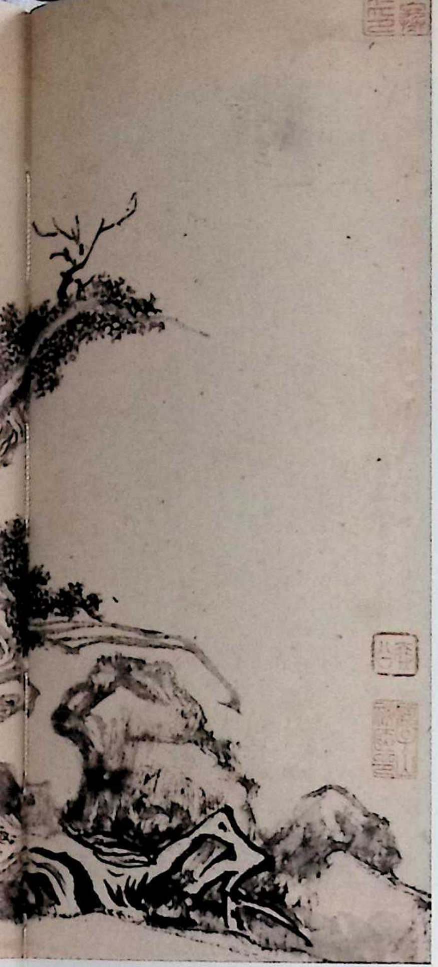
painted in the temple at invitation. Nearly 50 years later, Wen painted and wrote an ode for these trees also at the invitation by a friend. Therefore, it can be seen that there was a deep-rooted tradition of appreciating, painting, and writing about the seven junipers in the Wu area. This scroll, in general, portrays tree branches in dry texture strokes to fully present its twisted and snaking postures, and the leaves in dense, changing mossy dots. In addition to artistic value, this scroll has served as a shop window for later generations to have a peek into the painting and social networking activities of Wu School scholars in the mid-Ming Dynasty.

This scroll was sold to the Honolulu Museum of Art by Gustav Ecké, the first curator of Asian Art at this museum in 1952. Ecké once traveled to China between the 1920s and 1940s when he probably acquired this scroll in his private collection. In 2013, at the "In Honor of Hengshan: A Special Exhibition of Works by Wen Zhengming of the Wumen School" held at the Suzhou Museum, this scroll received much attention for its ingenuity.


雪虐霜凌歲月更枝
乾蓋偃勢崢嶸老夫記
詩杜陵語未需文章世
已驚　徵明寫寄
伯起茂才

The combination of old tree and rock, a very common motif in ancient Chinese paintings, has been a favorite of literati painters, including Su Shi, an important contributor to theories on literati painting and to whom *The Deadwood and Strange Stone* is attributed. Both Su and his close friend Huang Tingjian once wrote poems about paintings of withered trees, bamboos, and rocks by Su. It can be seen that this motif has been quite influential at least since the Northern Song Dynasty.

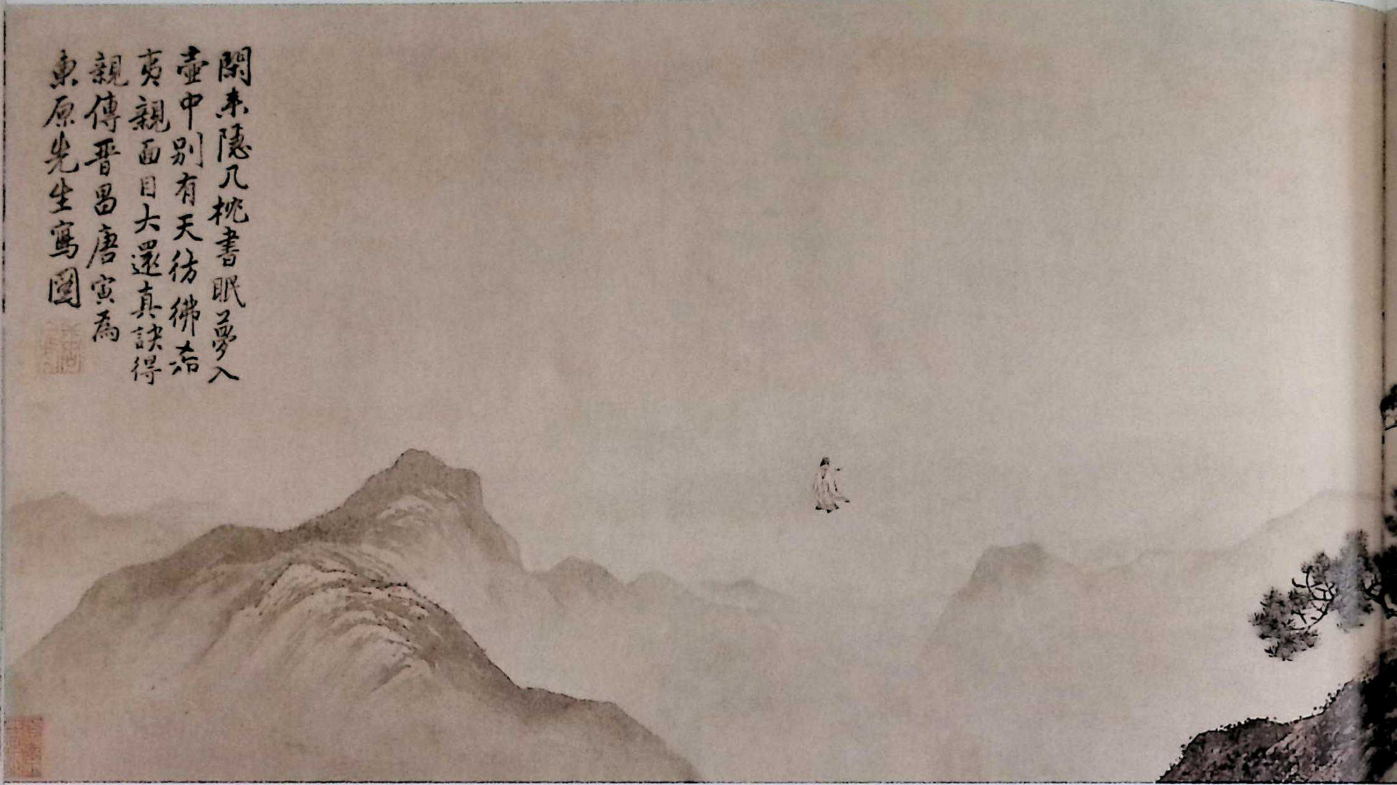
This piece by Wen Zhengming can be seen as a response to and innovation of this painting tradition. The objects portrayed are as simple as those by his predecessor Su Shi. It only portrays an aged, lean, and strange rock together with a low, old, and zigzagged cypress. The two lean close and entangle. As for the brushwork, Wen also applied a similar texturing technique, making it difficult to differentiate the two. It is obvious that the painter deliberately ignored the different textures of rock and wood, instead emphasized



Old Cypress and Rock
Ming Dynasty
1550
Wen Zhengming
Ink on Paper
26 × 48.9 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

their similar inherent qualities, in an effort to address them as a whole. Su Shi once said the intertwined trees and rocks under his brush externalized his internal mess. According to the postscript by Peng Nian, a scholar of the Ming Dynasty, Wen created this painting in 1550 at the age of 80. Perhaps, the weathered rock and the old cypress speak the mind of Wen?

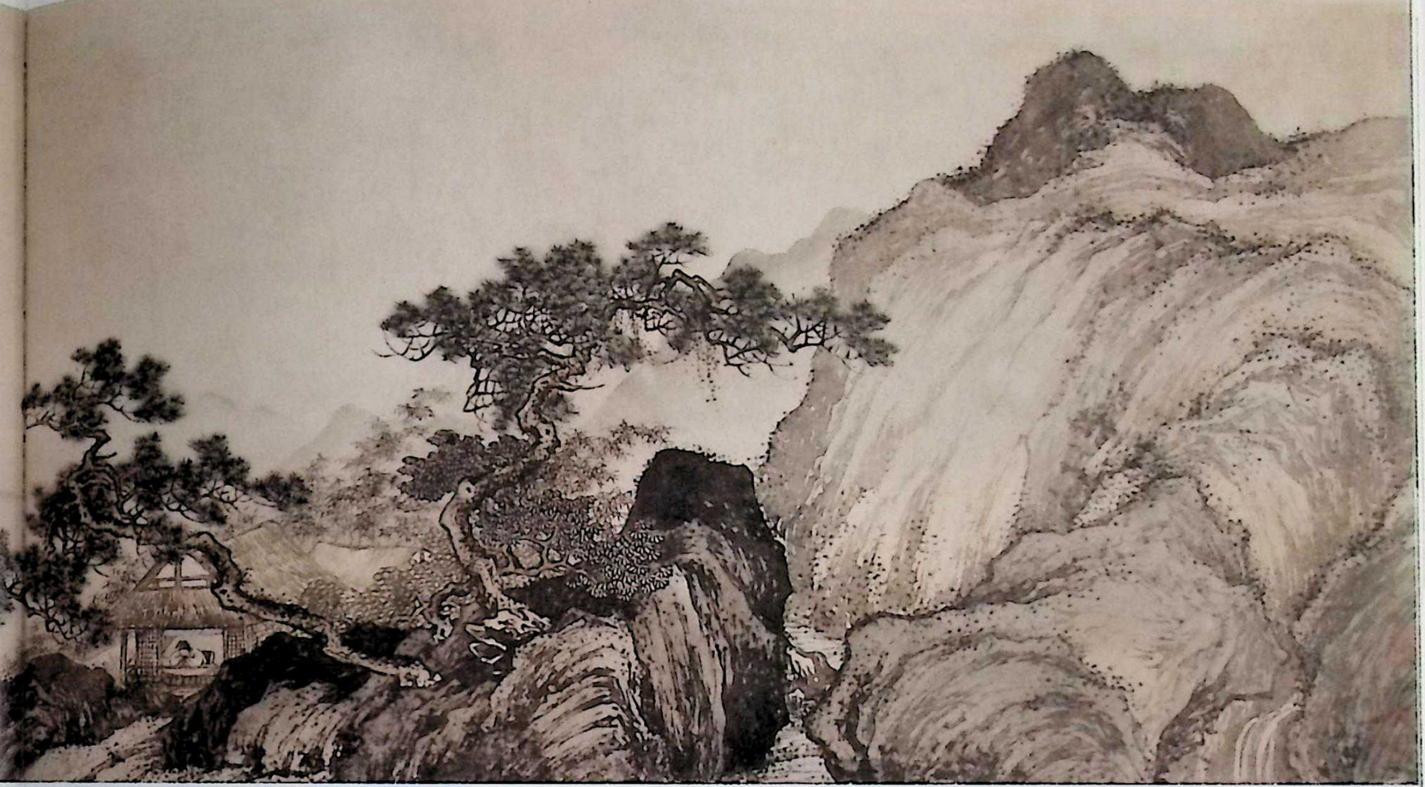
This painting ends with a poem written by Wen: "Having weathered various hardships over years, it still stands tall with a gnarled trunk and bare canopy. It reminds of one verse written by Du Fu, 'Not even showing its patterning, it would make the world amazed'." Besides, it indicates that the recipient of this painting is [Zhang] Boqi (i.e. Zhang Fengyi). According to stamps affixed by collectors and connoisseurs, it was once in the collections of Liu Shu and Gu Wenbin, among other Wu School followers, before it ended up overseas and was acquired by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1946.


閒來隱几枕書眠夢入
壺中別有天彷彿希
夷親面目大還真訣得
親傳晉昌唐寅爲
東原先生寫圖

The Thatched Hut of Dreaming of an Immortal
Ming Dynasty
Tang Yin
Ink and Color on Paper
29.6 × 682.1 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

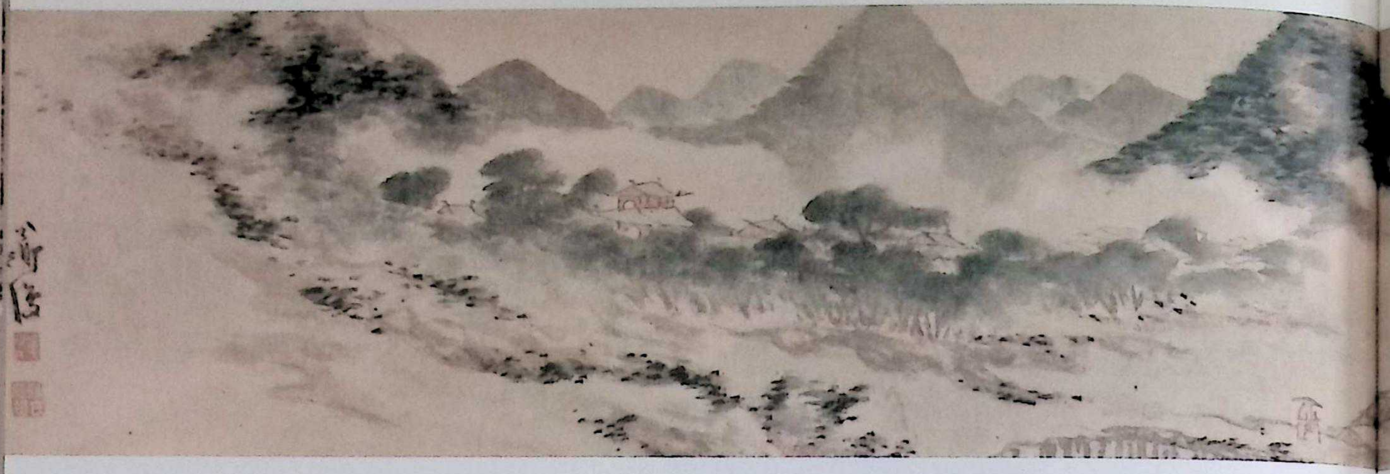
The images portrayed in this scroll are very interesting and a bit narrative. It opens with huge rocks and flying waterfalls, and mountains in the distance, all suggesting that this is a secluded place circled by mountains. As the scroll unfolds, there is a thatched hut, half hidden under two pines, in bamboo groves on a depressed ground amid mountains. Within the hut, a scholar is asleep under the window. In such a hidden, quiet environment, it seems nothing would disrupt his sweet dream. Compared with rich details portrayed in the first half of the scroll, the portrayal for the second half appears very ethereal and elusive, depicting the endless mountains in the distance with light ink renderings. Against such a backdrop is an immortal in a big loose rope, wind-blown, standing in mid air. This contrast of solid and elusive brushwork fittingly corresponds to the difference between reality and dream.

At the end of the scroll, there is a poem inscribed by Tang Yin (1470-



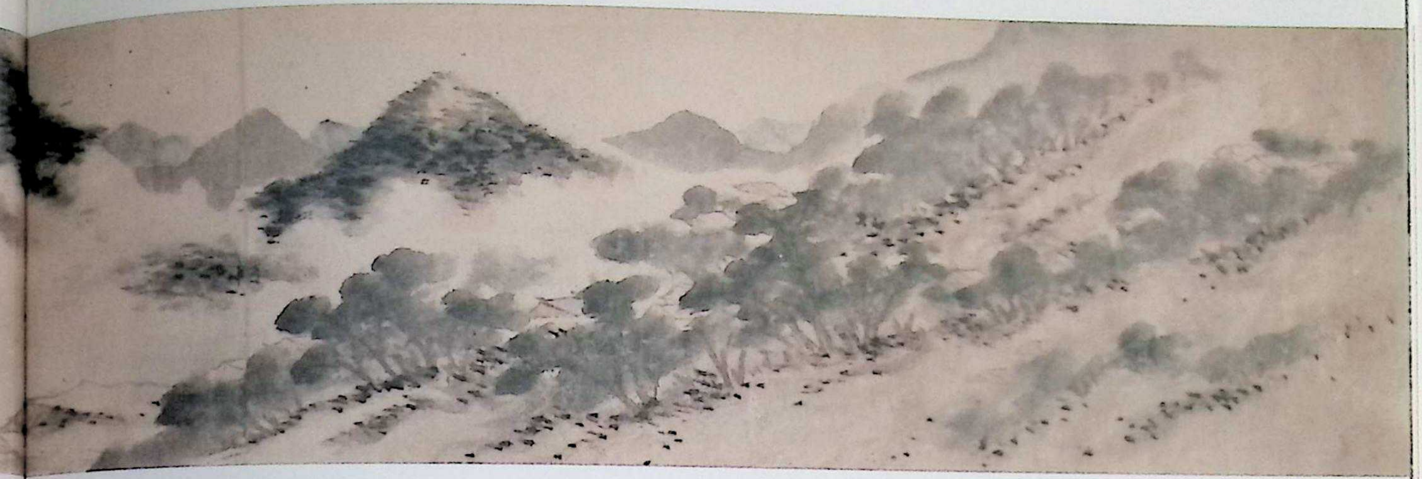
1523): "Leaning against the desk, did nothing but daydreaming, I dreamed of a world in the wine pot. It seems I've seen the face of the mysterious Creator, and been disclosed the secret of the great elixir." According the inscriptions by the painter, this scroll was commissioned by Dongyuan (i.e., Du Qiong) who dreamed of the said world portrayed. Based on textual research, Du Qiong was a scholar who believed in Taoism. In memory of his dreaming of an immortal, Du named his manor "Mengxian". What this scroll by Tang Yin portrays is both the dream world of Du and an ideal manor Tang himself has been dreaming of. Manor paintings were very popular in the Ming Dynasty. Many literati would invite well-known painters to their manors to paint for them. They would generally pose themselves against their manors in these paintings. The finished paintings would be added inscriptions and poems by their friends to commemorate the occasion. For example, this scroll contains postscripts by several contemporaries of the Tang Dynasty.

This scroll was initially in the hands of Du Qiong and his descendants, later held by Pang Laichen, and ended up in the U.S. where it was acquired by the Freer Gallery of Art in 1939.



Hills and Streams After Rain
Ming Dynasty
Chen Chun
Ink and Color on Paper
26.35 × 167.01 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art

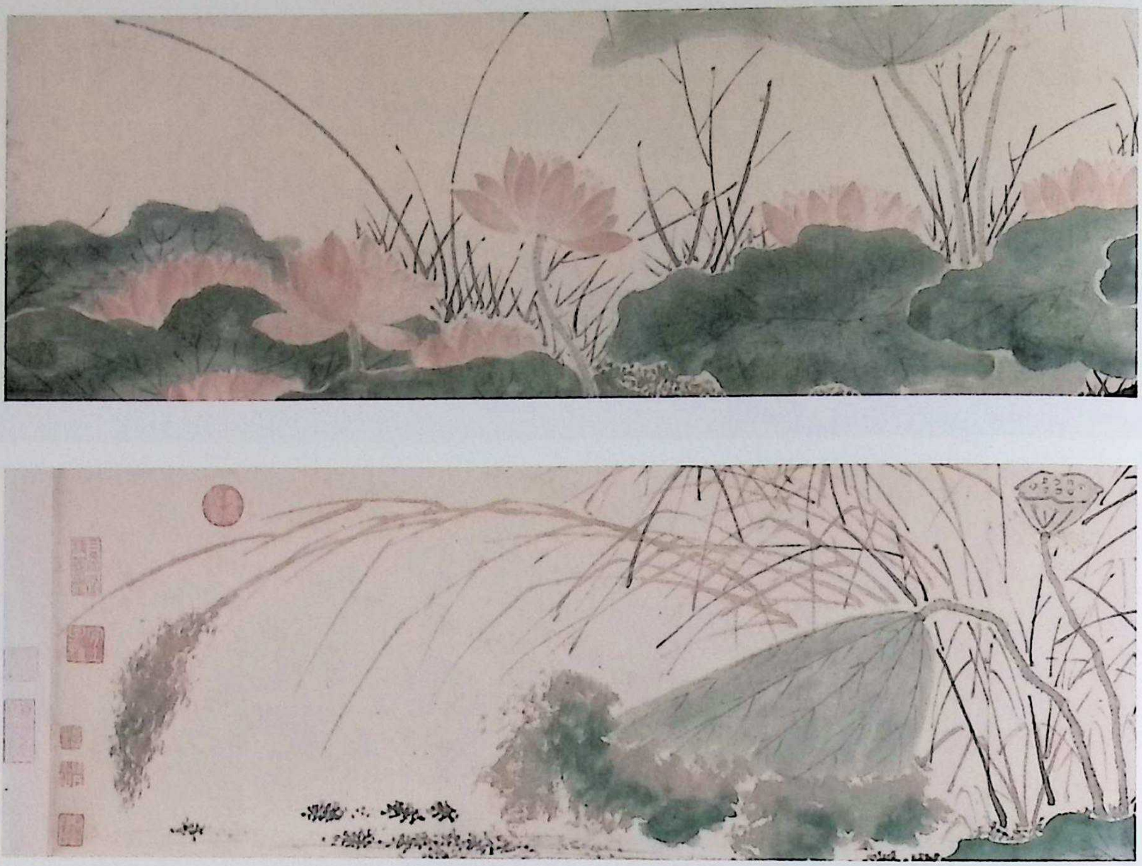
This scroll by Chen Chun (1483-1544) is about "cloudy mountains", a classical motif in Chinese landscape painting. The "cloudy mountains", as a form of painting, was first created by Mi Fu and Mi Youren, father and son, of the Song Dynasty. It was widely popular in the Yuan and Ming dynasties, a favorite motif shared by court, career, and literati painters alike. In this scroll, the portrayal of mountains inherits the tradition of previous periods: foot hills hidden amid pervasive clouds, only the parts above the waists of mountains can be seen. However, when he addressed this motif, Chen added some elements favored by Wu School painters, such as the reclusive scholar wielding a walking stick and the pavilions and towers half hidden on the mountains. The rocks and trees are depicted in moist ink blots, light or dark, which is a traditional technique for portraying cloudy mountains. The portrayal of human figure, pavilions, and rocks in the foreground shows traces of techniques used by Wu School painters in



the 16th century. This scroll, on a whole, appears moist and misty, with a wide range of changing shades of ink.

Chen Chun, a native in Suzhou, was a member of the community of literati painters led by Wen Zhengming who was also from the Wu area. Predecessors including Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming had deep influences on Chen's painting style. According to literature, Chen studied landscape paintings by the Four Masters of the Yuan Dynasty in his early years, then in midlife he was steeped in paintings created by Mi Fu, Mi Youren, and their disciples. Though the date of creation is not inscribed on it, seen from the maturity of brushwork and style, this scroll is supposed to be created in his middle age. It also reflects the typical appearance of landscape paintings by Chen in his prime years.

In today's narrative of the history of fine arts, Chen Chun is known for his small freehand flower paintings. However, seen from this scroll, Chen's landscape paintings are no less appealing.

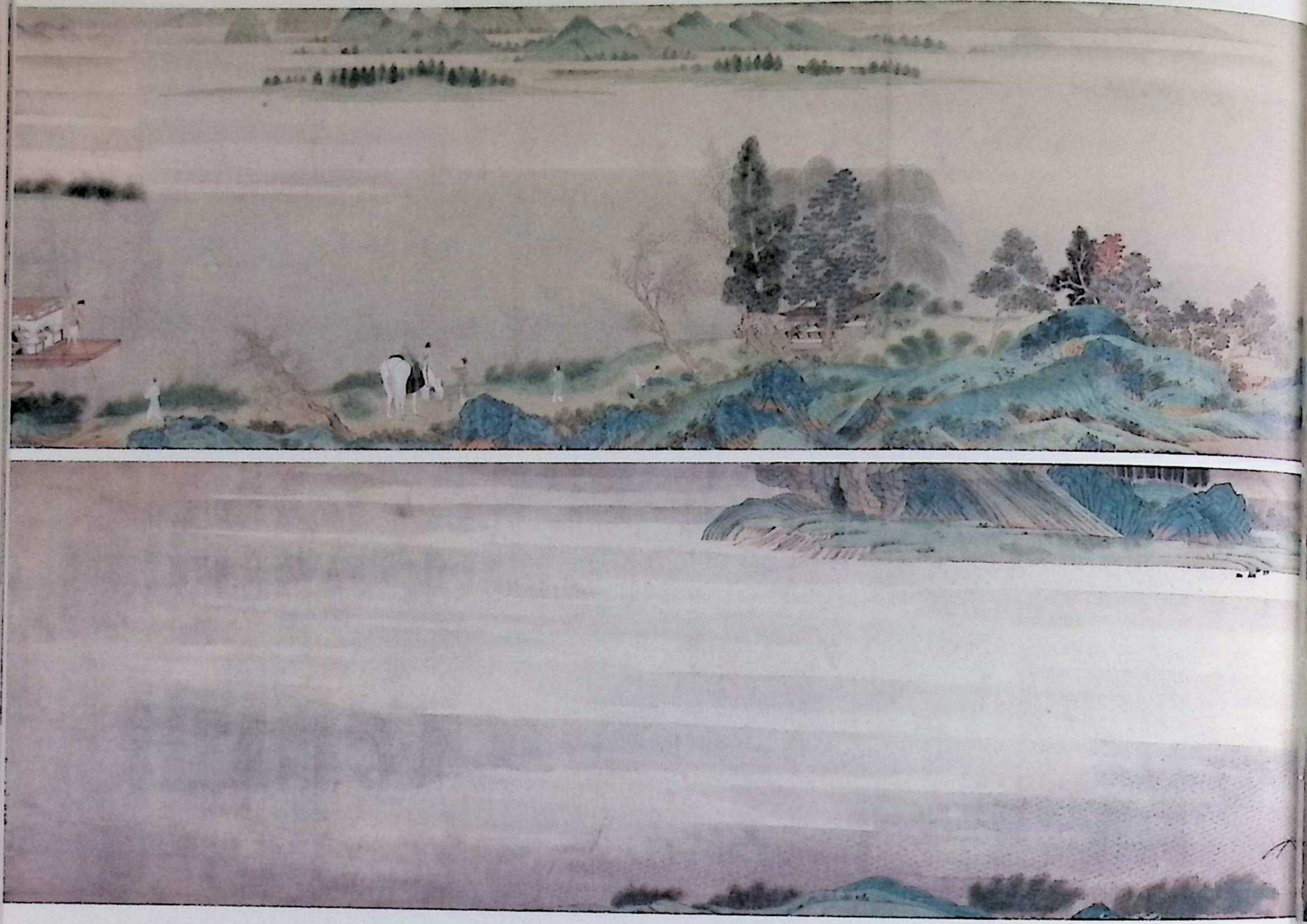


Life Cycle of the Lotus
Ming Dynasty
Chen Chun
Ink and Color on Paper
30.48 × 583.57 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Chen Chun's flower-and-bird paintings outperformed his landscape ones. He studied under Wen Zhengming in his early years and established a rather neat and refined style. Later, he shaped his own style, in particular in freehand flower painting. For this reason, Chen Chun and Xu Wei were called "Baiyang and Qingteng" (respectively the style name of Chen and Xu). Today's books on the history of fine arts regard Chen Chun as a key figure in freehand flower-and-bird painting who had far-reaching impacts on later painters of this genre. Chen, together with Xu Wei of the late Ming Dynasty and Zhu Da and Shi Tao of the early Qing Dynasty, had great influences even down to modern times. For example, Wu Changshuo and Qi Baishi, among other modern masters of painting, all spoke highly of Chen Chun.

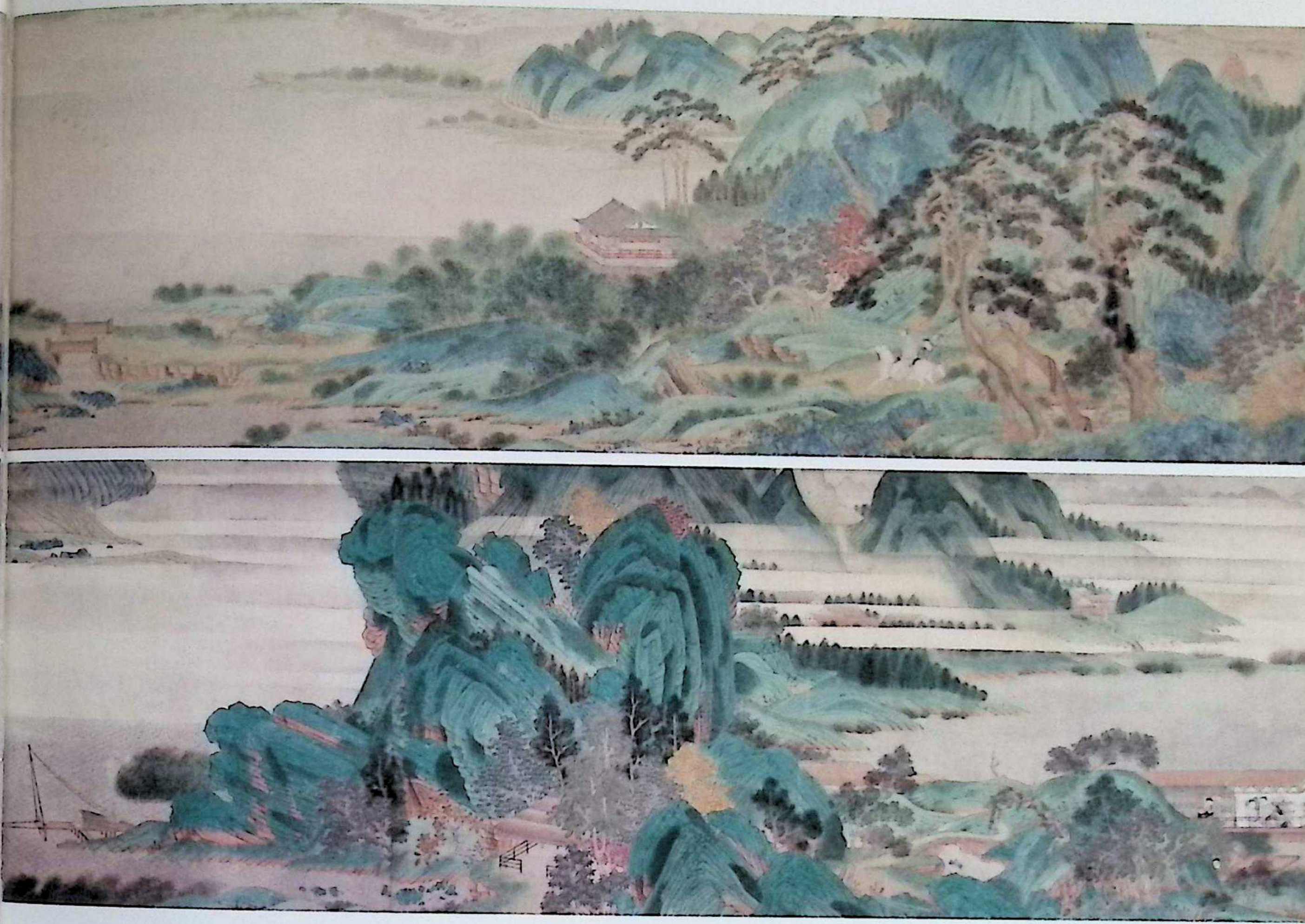
Most of Chen's extant paintings portray common flowers and plants. "A flower or two and one or half a leaf, lightly outlined or shaded, exudes a subtle touch of irregular beauty." Steeped in the literati circle of the Wu area over many years, Chen's paintings display a distinct air typical of literati. This scroll, in boneless strokes, portrays the life cycle of the lotus from budding to flowering. The light, elegant colors show a scholarly taste. There are the "Beauties in the Taiye Pond" inscribed by Wang Zhideng at the beginning of the scroll, and a postscript personally by Chen at the end.

This scroll was part of former collections of the Qing palace, later purchased by Laurence Sickman from Puyi in early 1931. Sickman recalled that back then, he accompanied his teacher Langdon Warner on a visit to Puyi who was then in Tianjin for refuge. They bought several paintings from Puyi, including this *Life Cycle of the Lotus*.



Saying Farewell at Xunyang
Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Ink and Color on Paper
33.7 × 400.7 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art

Qiu Ying (ca. 1497-1552) was very talented in modeling after ancient styles and highly accomplished in painting. This is partly due to his own diligence, and partly closely related to his connections with collectors including Xiang Yuanbian, Zhou Fenglai, and Chen Guan. Qiu was a regular guest of many collectors, so he was able to see and copy a large number of famous paintings. Xiang Shengbiao, grandson of Xiang Yuanbian, remarked, Qiu "had viewed more than one thousand famous paintings from the Song and Yuan dynasties. Plus he is talented by nature,



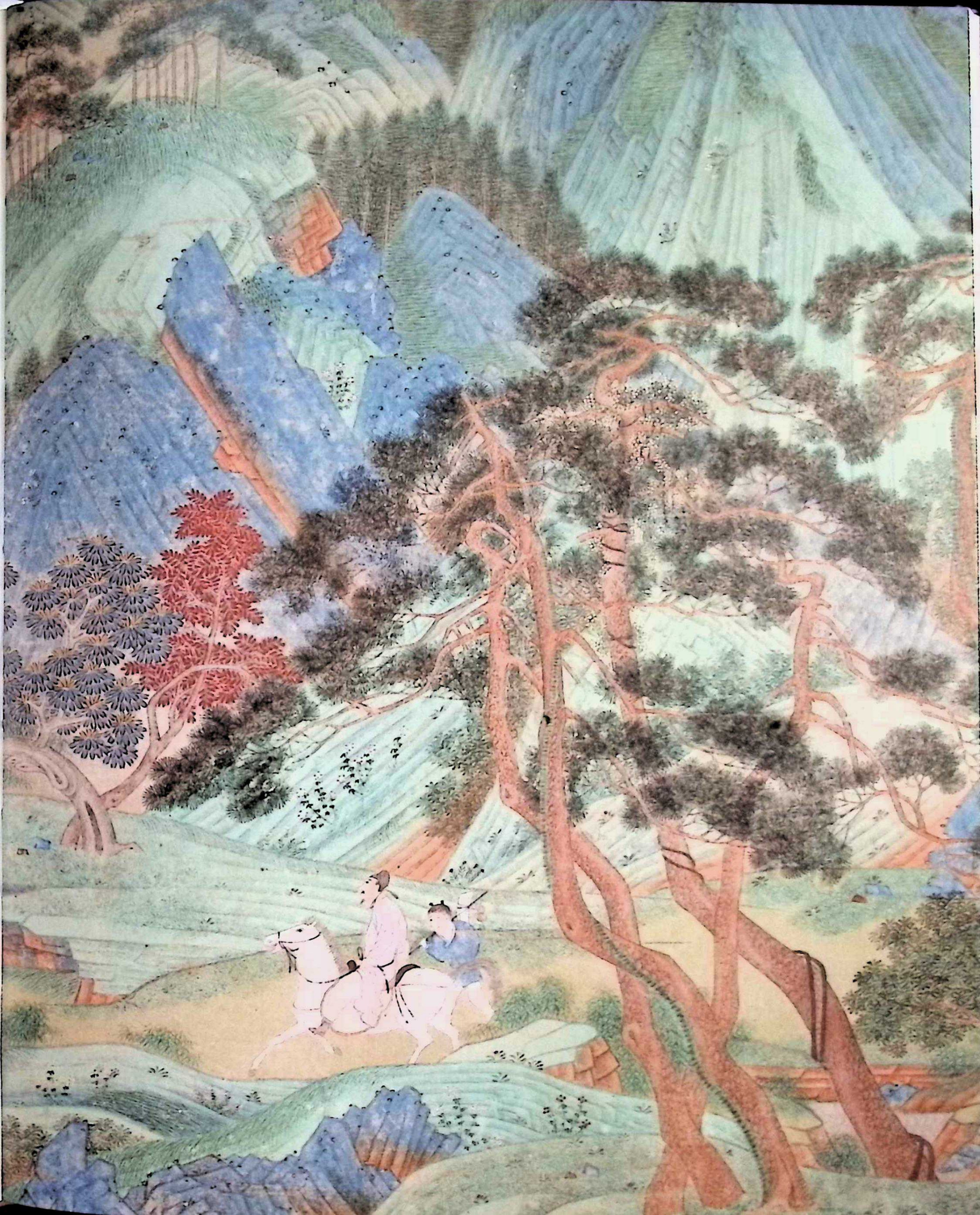
he feeds off the best Nature can offer, as if he was an otherworldly man."

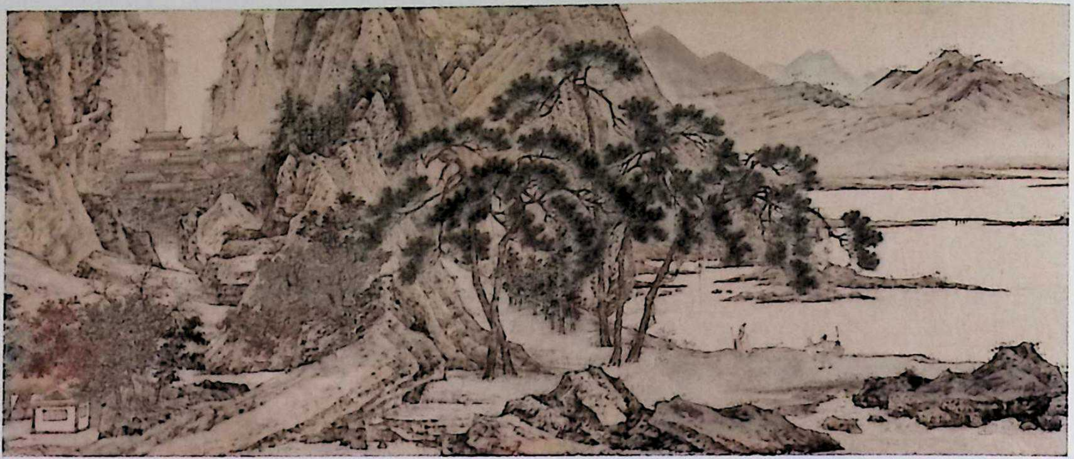
This scroll is very ornamental due to its archaic blue and green colors. The painter did not pursue changes in brushwork when he was portraying, be it the clouds, waters, mountains, rocks, buildings, or human figures. Instead, he focused on presenting a beauty of primitive simplicity. Such a style finds its origin in paintings by Qian Xuan of the Yuan Dynasty.

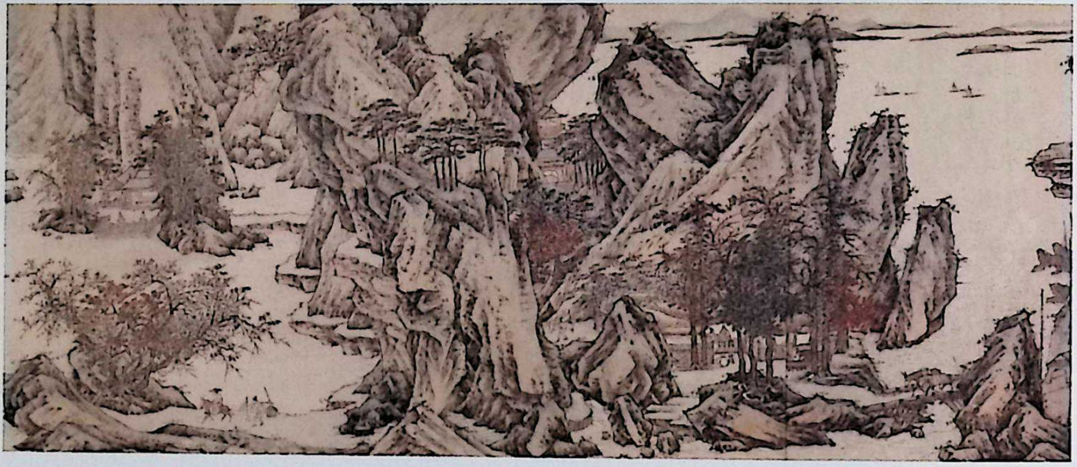
"Saying Farewell at Xunyang" is a poetic motif from the *Song of a Pipa*

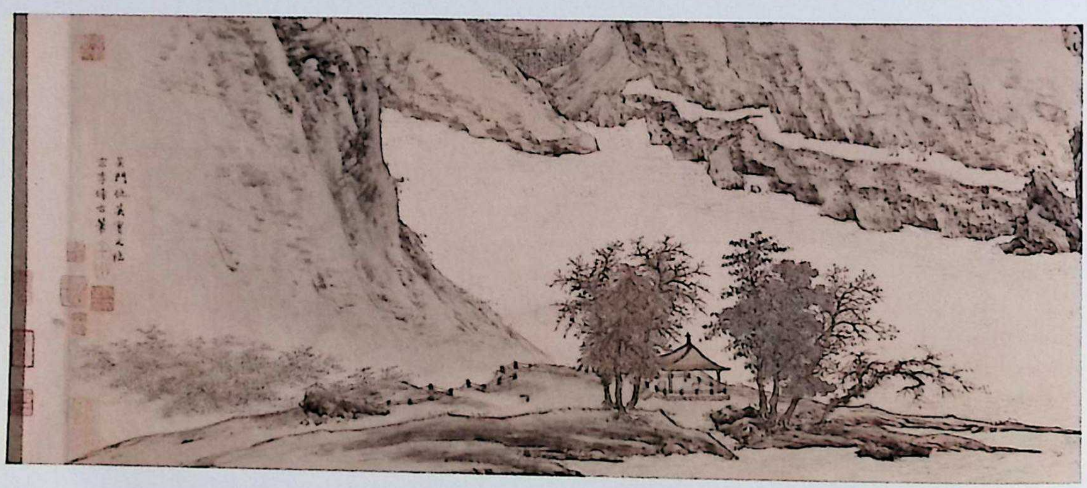
Player by Bai Juyi, a great poet of the Tang Dynasty. Many Wumen School contemporaries of Qiu Ying, including Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin, and Lu Zhi, created paintings on this motif. This scroll opens with a scholar on a horse traveling out of a mountain. As it unfolds till the middle, the scholar is taking a bow beside a horse, bidding farewell. Aboard a passenger boat moored to the bank is the scholar listening to a female pipa player performing. Then the river landscape extends to the end of scroll. It is a bit narrative, telling a story from right to left. Though this scroll brings out the theme with these personages, as a whole, its portrayal of riverside landscape is more eye-catching. The *Painted Album of Figures and Stories* by Qiu Ying, collected in the Palace Museum, also includes a portrayal on this subject, but due to limited space, only extracts two classical episodes, i.e., dismounting from the horse and listening to pipa music in a boat. A comparison of these two paintings would reveal that they are quite consistent, be it the position of boat or the postures of personages.

This scroll was acquired by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1946.









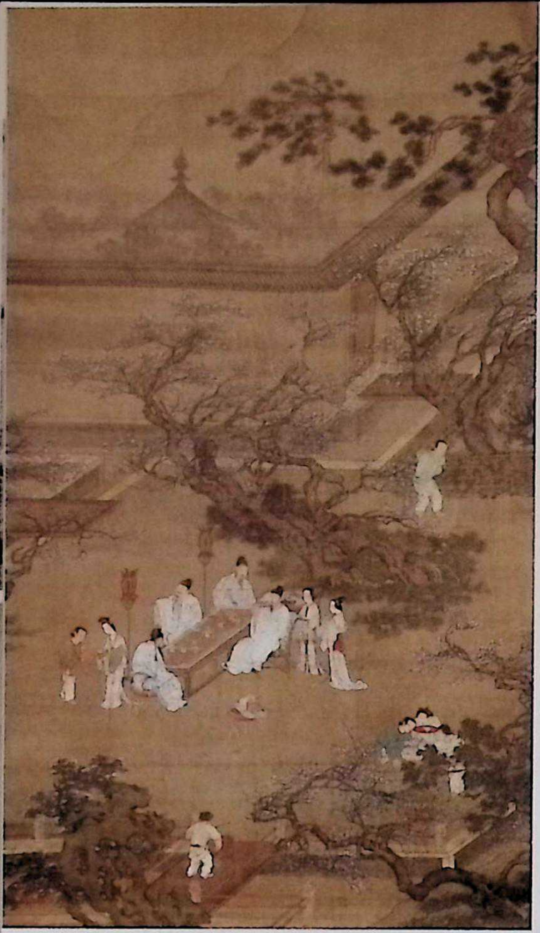
Landscape in the Style of Li Tang

Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Ink and Color on Paper
25.4 × 306.7 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

The inscriptions at the end of the scroll suggest that the painter copied after the style of Li Tang, an important painter at the turn of the Northern and Southern Song dynasties. Li Tang, one of the Four Masters of the Southern Song Dynasty in the field of painting, excelled in landscape and figure paintings and was influential at the Imperial Painting Academy of the Southern Song Dynasty. The original by Li was lost, so it is impossible to compare this scroll by Qiu Ying with it. Nevertheless, this scroll shows some traces of extant paintings of Li in terms of its motif and content, composition and perspective of middle ground, and its angular and forceful strokes.

This scroll opens with a scholar and his attendant traveling on a trail along a creek, bringing the views into the sight of viewers. Though not narrative, the scroll addresses a diversity of components. The part featuring mountain ranges portrays old trees, pavilions, and thatched cottages. Amid these mountains are interspersed with waterfalls, springs, various trees, half-hidden trails, and travelers and hermits. The part featuring waters depicts boats and oars, sailboats, waterside pavilions, sloped riverbanks, and terraces and platforms. All these elements are frequently seen in paintings of the Song Dynasty. In addition to the axe-cut texturing technique applied to mountains and rocks, a characteristic of paintings by Li Tang, this scroll uses primitive and simple colors. In this light, this scroll did model after the style of Li. The *Traveling along the Clear River*, created by Wu Hong of the Qing Dynasty in 1672 and currently collected in the Shanghai Museum, is very similar to this scroll, so it might be a copy after this scroll by Qiu Ying or after the same master copy.

There is a stamp affixed by a collector Xiang Yuanbian, suggesting that it is likely to be custom-made for Xiang. Xiang Yuanbian was one of the most important collectors in the mid-Ming Dynasty and one of the most important patrons of Qiu. Qiu's painting style benefited a lot from his interactions with collectors including Xiang. There is the "Authentic Work of Qiu Shizhou" by Wang Wenzhi inscribed at the beginning of the scroll, and several postscripts at the end. This scroll was acquired by the Freer Gallery of Art in 1939.



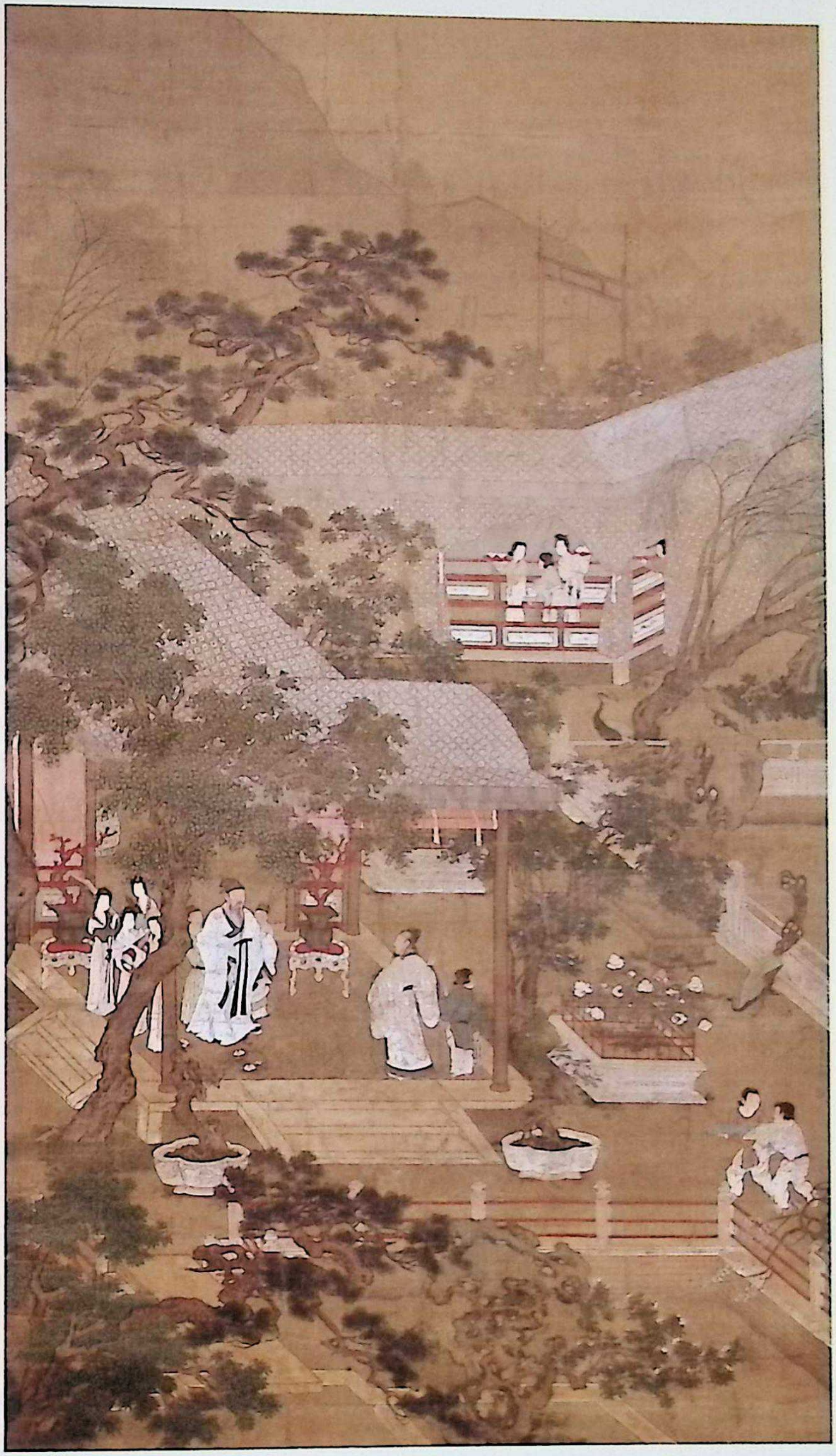
Peach and Plum Blossom Garden

Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Ink and Color on Silk
224 × 130 cm
Collected in the Kyoto Chion-in

"Literati gathering" was part of the social life of ancient scholars. The Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the 9th year of Yonghe in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (353) has inspired generations of literati to organize similar gathering events of their own versions. They documented such occasions with writings and paintings. Therefore, scenes related to literati gatherings were also an integral part of classical Chinese paintings. Some paintings documented current gathering events of the literati circle, while others reminisced about famous gatherings of previous dynasties. These two types of paintings were not entirely clear-cut, rather often drew upon each other.

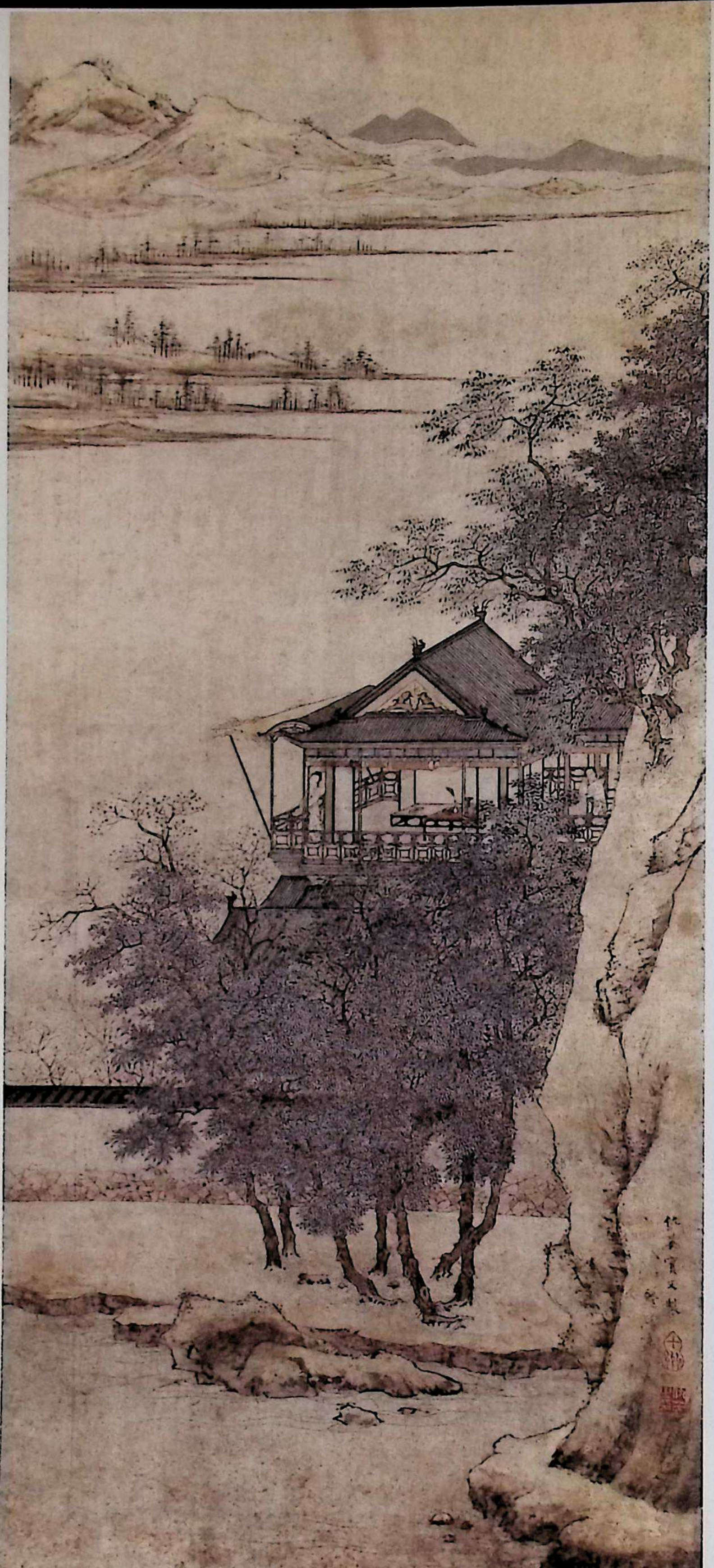
These two scrolls by Qiu Ying fall into this vein. Although seen from the titles, one piece is about the Golden Valley Garden in Luoyang built by Shi Chong, a very wealthy statesman of the Western Jin Dynasty (265-317), while the other about the Peach and Plum Blossom Garden in Chang'an where the great poet Li Bai and his friends gathered together. However, putting aside the titles, the two pieces' personages and elements alone are not distinctly identifiable. The painter fully drew upon paintings about garden gatherings of previous dynasties. Both the composition and specific portrayal can find their origin in ancient paintings. This is closely related to Qiu's friendships with several famous collectors, which enabled him to view and imitate a large number of ancient paintings.

The similar motifs, compositions, and techniques of these two scrolls suggest that they were initially part of the same set of pieces, with the other two or four similar pieces probably lost in oblivion in history, and only these two survived. The 200cm-plus-long size indicates that these scrolls were made to decorate halls or meeting rooms, rather than objects for literati's desks. These two pieces are full of rich details. The neat and refined brushwork fittingly matches the luxurious colors. Literati painters generally disdained such paintings. However, Qiu Ying, a lacquer man-turned-painter, did not have many choices facing the requirements of the patron. Today, we have no way of knowing who this patron was, but there is no doubt that Qiu fully got what the patron wanted, and perfectly visualized the scenes.



The Golden Valley Garden

Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Ink and Color on Silk
224 × 130 cm
Collected in the Kyoto
Chion-in



Landscape with a Lady Overlooking a Lake

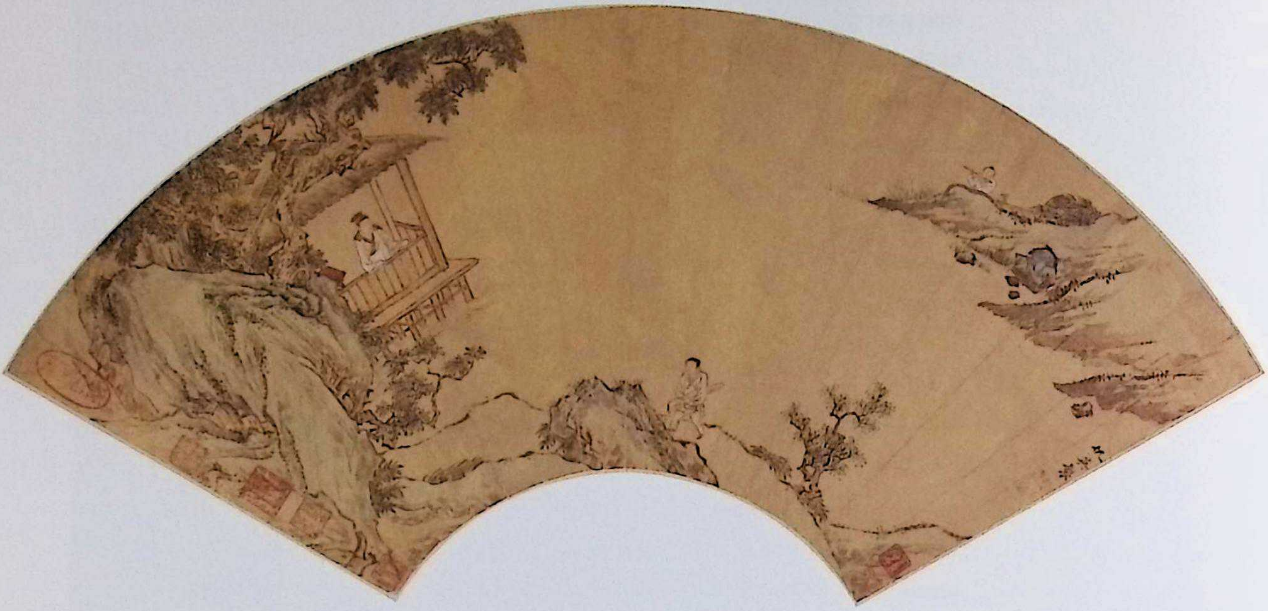
Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Ink and Color on Paper
89.6 × 37.5 cm
Collected in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This piece of work is attributed to Qiu Ying because of the painter's signature and stamp on the lower right corner. Its theme or composition shows considerable influences by the Zhe School. For example, the precipitous cliffs portrayed on the right side represent an element and composition pattern often used in Zhe School paintings. Qiu Ying, equally famous as Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming, has been historically touted as one of the Four Masters of the Wu School, but it can not be denied that this lacquer man-turned-painter was less cultured than the other three. Obviously, Qiu Ying is not a literati painter. However, it is exactly for this reason that his painting style was not limited by sectarian prejudices and was able to be eclectic.

There are scenes of looking far into the distance portrayed in paintings from the Southern Song Dynasty. Relevant motifs also can be seen in court paintings from the early Ming Dynasty. The *Landscape of Overlooking from a Riverside Pavilion*, collected in the Palace Museum by Wang E, an imperial painter, is a horizontal scroll. In contrast, this scroll by Qiu is a compacted hanging scroll that combines elements of overlooking scenes. The pavilion and lady, at the heart of the painting, are placed in the middle ground as a visual focus, while the river and banks respectively as foreground and background. This composition highlights a sense of distance and depth, echoing the theme of this scroll. The trees and walls in the foreground suggest the seclusion of the environment in which the lady is, and the posture of standing alone on a tower and looking into the distance conveys a solitary mood.

This motif was probably influenced by literary works as the Tang Dynasty produced many poems about looking into the distance from a riverside pavilion. The fine brushwork and placid coloring shows the painter's full understanding and grasp of the theme. In spite of clear-cut lines and sharp and strong strokes, this painting as a whole exudes a touch of poetic melancholy.

This scroll, together with the *Bare Willows and Distant Mountains*, a fan piece attributed to Ma Yuan, was purchased by Kokichi Hayasaki, nephew of Kakuzō Okakura, then an adviser to the Oriental Art Department, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA) in 1913, and acquired by the MFA in 1914.



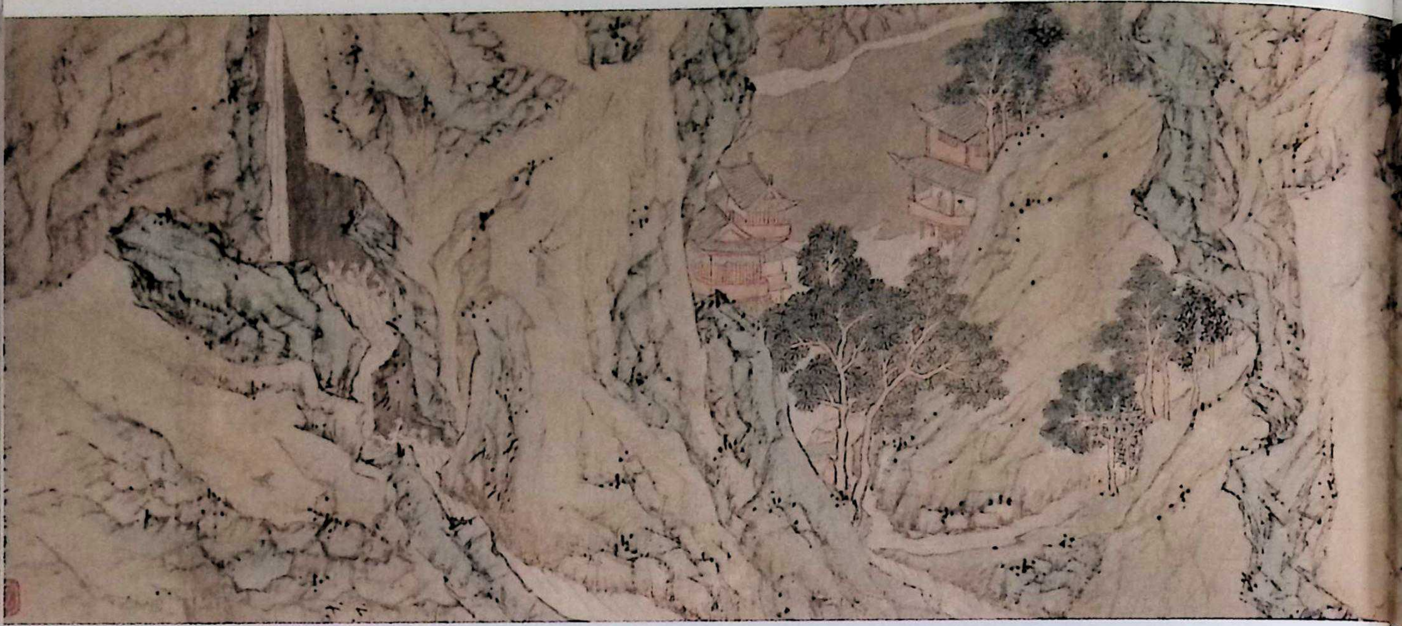
Fan Painting with Figures

Ming Dynasty
Qiu Ying
Color on Gilded Paper
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

Fan covering, like scroll and album, is a form of traditional Chinese painting. Compared with other forms, it is to an extent functional and ornamental in addition to meeting viewers' aesthetic needs. Further, it is a painting form that can be readily played with in hands as a fan can "be readily taken out or put away in the holder's bosom or sleeves". Although round silk fan can be dated back to the Han Dynasty when it has already been popular among the aristocracy, fan painting only flourished by the Song Dynasty. Circular fan paintings from the Song Dynasty are mostly on silk with exquisite brushwork and mild colors, in line with the mainstream painting style of that period.

After the folding fan was introduced, it was gradually set to replace the circular fan. "By the Ming Dynasty, folding fan flourished, while round silk fan fell into oblivion." Fan painting for paper folding fans went with the trend and became wildly popular. In particular, in the mid-Ming Dynasty, many Wu School painters created a large number of fan paintings. This piece of fan covering was painted by Qiu Ying, one of the Four Masters of the Wu School, with its right side inscribed with "By Qiu Ying". On the left side is a waterside pavilion hidden under a huge rock and an old tree. In the pavilion, a scholar is looking into the distance. At the bottom, a boy carrying a *qin* is slowly walking along the river. In the center is a large blank space, implying the presence of waters. On the top right corner is a stretch of sloped riverbank where a leaf of boat is hidden and a man is playing the flute, echoing the said scholar standing in the pavilion who is perhaps listening to the flute music drifting over from across the river. The fluid brushwork and elegant colors on gilded paper, though small in size, show the painter's ingenious arrangement. This is indeed an intriguing piece.

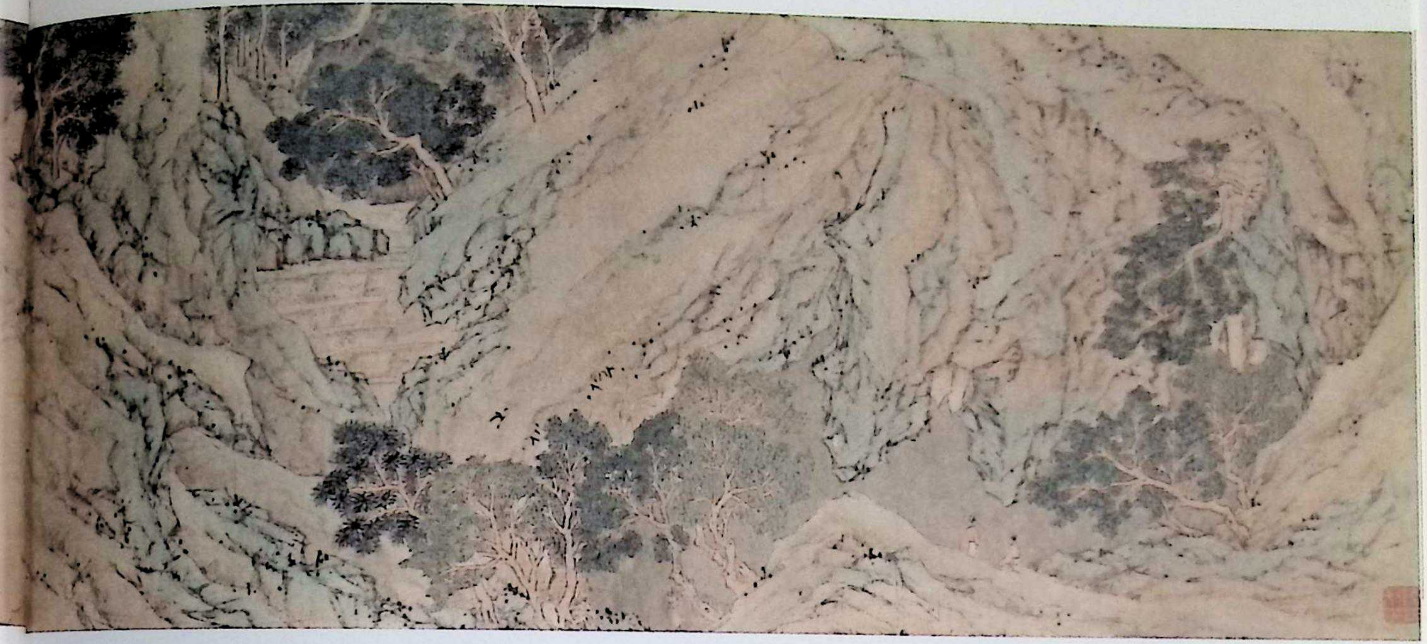
This fan painting was acquired by the Honolulu Museum of Art in 1964.



Lu Zhi (1496-1576), a Wu School painter, according to Wang Shizhen, studied under Wen Zhengming in painting and Zhu Yunming in calligraphy. Critics of the Ming Dynasty spoke highly of Lu's flower-and-bird paintings, but he is primarily known for his landscape paintings from today's perspective of painting history. Seen from his extant works, Lu's paintings are quite elaborate and show traces of academy painting and blue and green landscape painting, but appear elegant, delicate, and appealing as it blends in a scholarly taste.

The Jade Field
Ming Dynasty
1549
Lu Zhi
Ink and Color on Paper
24.13 × 136.05 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art

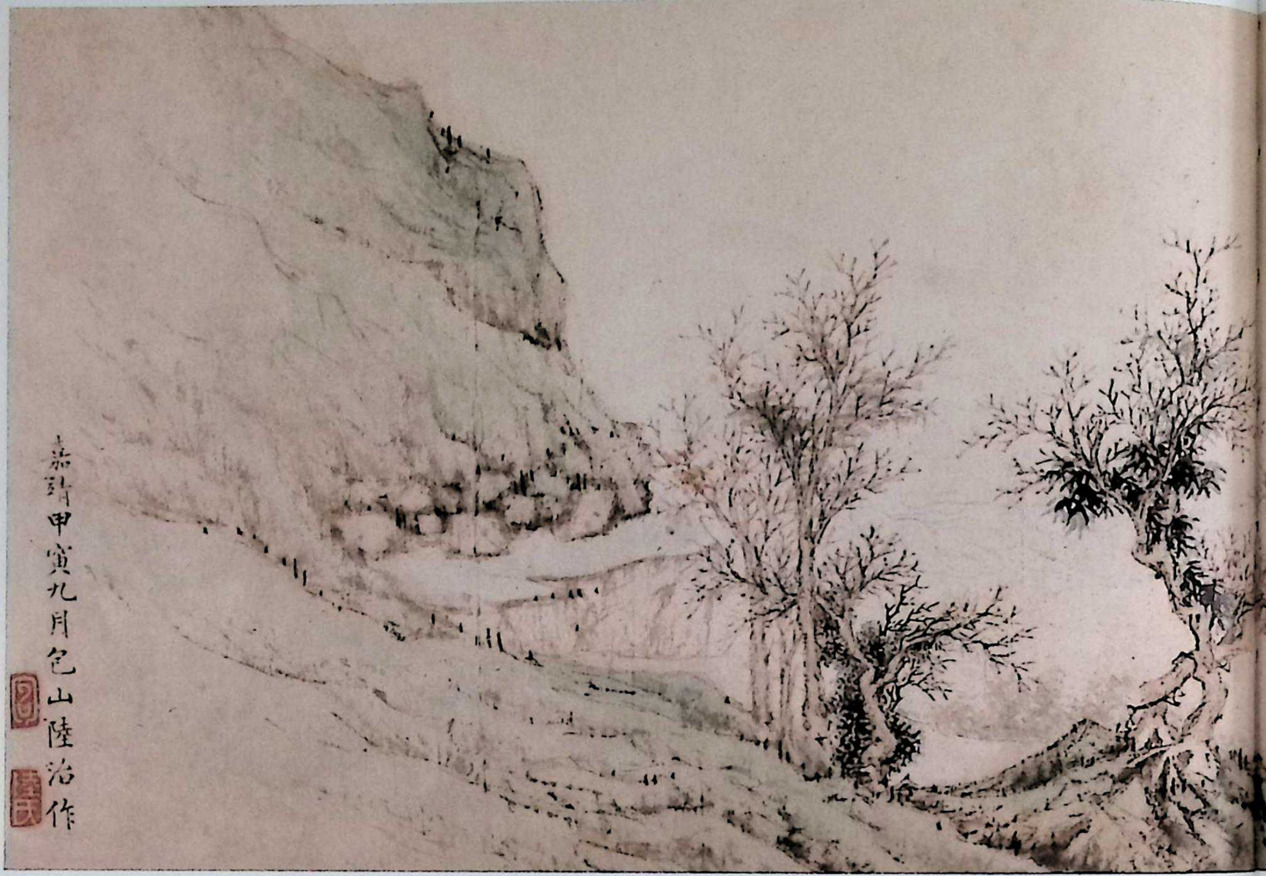
Lu Zhi painted more than one piece of *The Jade Field*. Qiu Ying also created a painting of the same title. Jade Field (Yutian) is a courtesy name of a medical assistant with the surname of Wang from Kunshan. This scroll is supposed to be a gift from Lu Zhi to Wang Yutian. Throughout painting history, naming paintings after a courtesy name was a unique practice of Wu School painters. The landscape portrayed in this scroll



perhaps can be seen as a symbol of the recipient's noble character.

With a cross section-based composition, this scroll depicts amazing and precipitous mountain views. It opens with two hermits, one standing and the other seated, on the top of a circle of mountain cliffs, as if implying that there is a cave in front of it. There are trees hanging on the mountains upside down, which heighten its strangeness. Such a composition can also be seen in other works by Lu Zhi, including the *Jade Cave Fairy Land* collected in the Taipei Palace Museum. This scroll ends with a similar pattern: two towers half-hidden among the towering, looped mountains, and one trail suggesting that the towers are located in an open, flat valley.

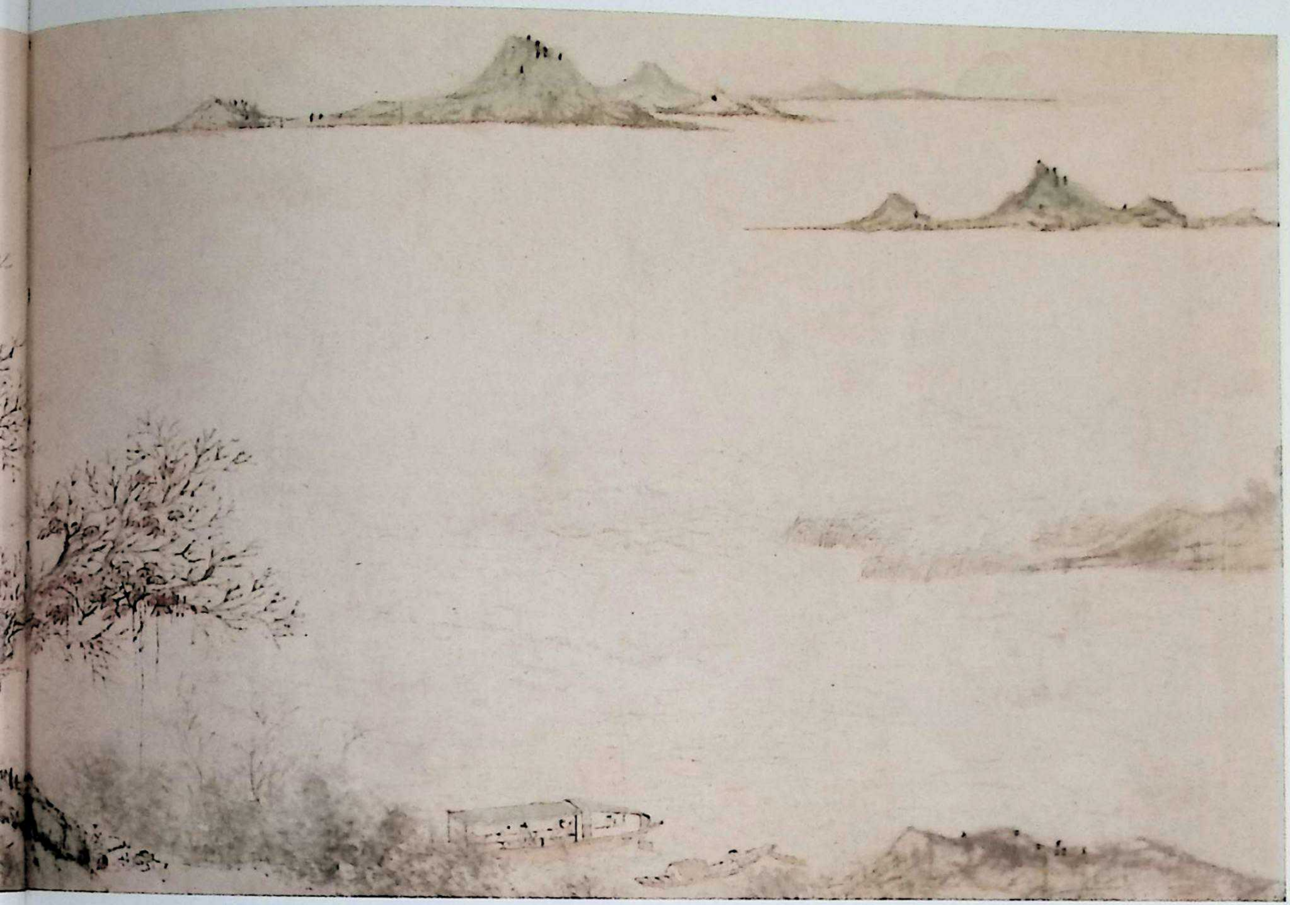
The entire painting is full without blank space, fragmented but not messy. The light blue and green colors and naive human figures, plus mild brushwork, make this scroll very archaic. This is a typical piece of landscape painting in Suzhou in the second half of the 16th century.


嘉靖甲寅九月包山陸治作

Autumn Colors at Xunyang
Ming Dynasty
1554
Lu Zhi
Ink and Color on Paper
22.3 × 100.1 cm
Collected in the Freer Gallery of Art

Paintings visualizing the *Song of a Pipa Player* could be dated back to the Yuan Dynasty or an earlier period. However, this motif only went popular in the Ming Dynasty. This piece by Lu Zhi is exactly about this motif. Similar motifs can be found in paintings by Lu's immediate predecessors including Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin, and Qiu Ying, as well as his contemporaries, including Wen Jia and Wen Boren. Among these paintings, there are both figure paintings portraying the protagonists in stories and landscape ones focused on natural views, covering album, hand scroll, and hanging scroll, among other forms.

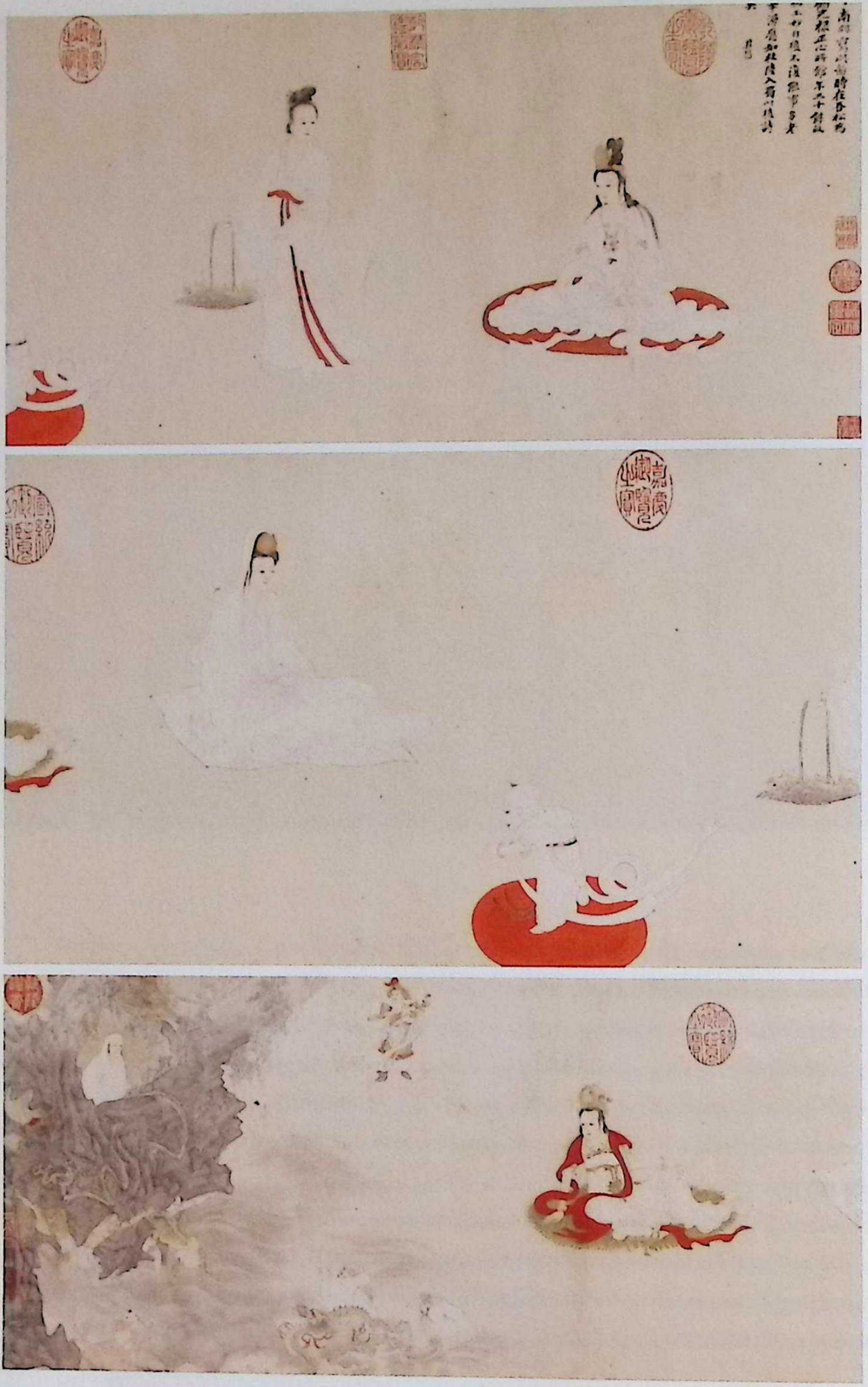
This hand scroll is a piece of landscape painting. The painter played down the plots in the original poem, instead portrayed an open river



along with clusters of grass and trees on the slopes and banks. Only the red maple on the riverside and two small boats approaching the shore at the end of scroll echo the poetic description of "In maple leaves and rushes autumn seemed to sign" and "My friend and I dismounted and came into the boat." The focus of portrayal is undoubtedly placed on the river landscape, while the boats and personages are insignificant and easily ignored. With dominant ink and slight color, on a whole, this scroll is wrapped in a slight touch of sadness, matching the sense of frustration conveyed by the *Song of a Pipa Player*.

In terms of painting, Lu Zhi was a disciple of Wen Zhengming. Besides, Lu was a huge fan of Ni Zan, though he did not limit his imitation of Ni to brushwork or technique. As shown in this painting, the solitary touch, loosely scattered composition, and gentle strokes all can be traced back to Ni Zan.

This scroll was acquired by the Freer Gallery of Art in 1939.



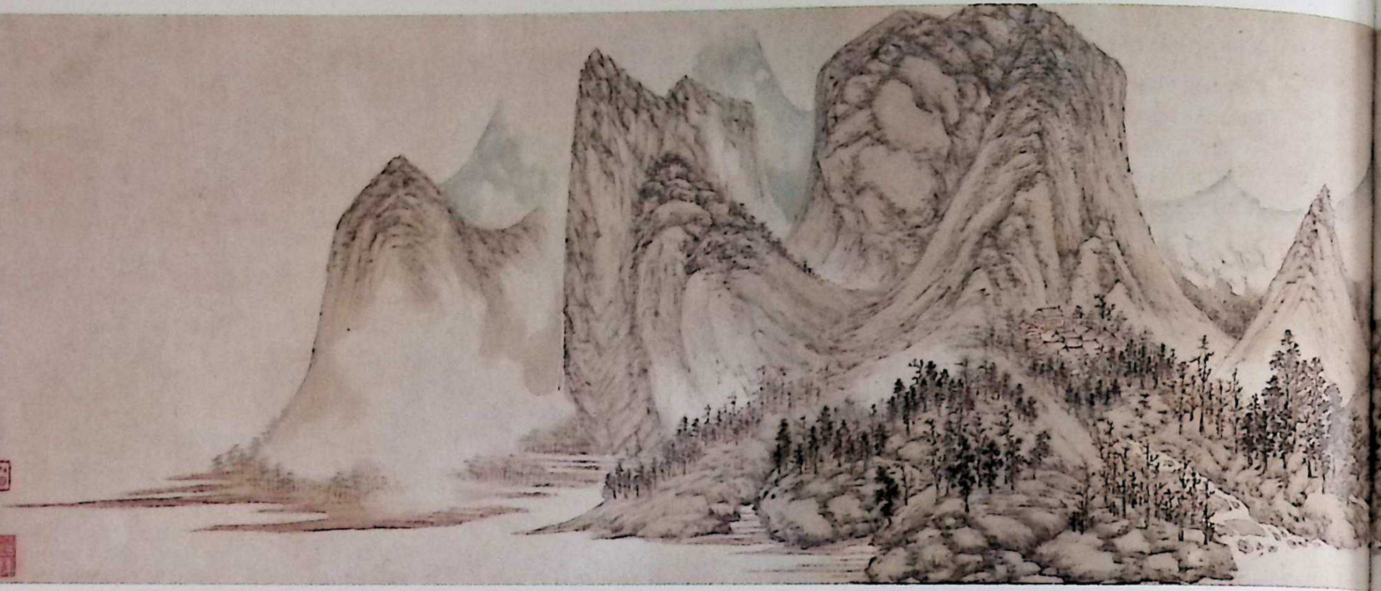
Five Forms of Guanyin

Ming Dynasty
Ding Yunpeng
Ink and Color on Paper
28.58 × 134.62 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

The belief in Guanyin (Kuan-yin, Goddess of Mercy) was introduced to China from India roughly in the Wei-Jin period (220-420). It was quickly spread across the country as it catered to the spiritual needs of the people at that period. To date, it is still widely believed, with ever-lasting appeal. How was the name "Guanyin" derived? It is said that if anyone who suffers concentrates on chanting its name, the goddess would perceive and hear his or her voice and come to rescue.

The tradition of painting Guanyin is very old. According to the chapter on Universal Gate in the *Lotus Sutra*, Guanyin has thirty-three forms. Historically, there were painters who painted the thirty-three manifestations of Guanyin. However, in fact, the different forms of Guanyin are not that different. Also, an image does not correspond to a particular name. Take this scroll as an example. From the right to left, the second one is more easily identified as she holds a bamboo basket that contains fish, i.e., "Guanyin with Fish Basket". The third one, wearing a white robe and no ornaments other than the crown piece, is probably "Guanyin in White Robe". The last one, sitting up straight in a rock cave in meditation, is possibly "Guanyin in the Cave". It appears that the painter did not follow any particular image patterns.

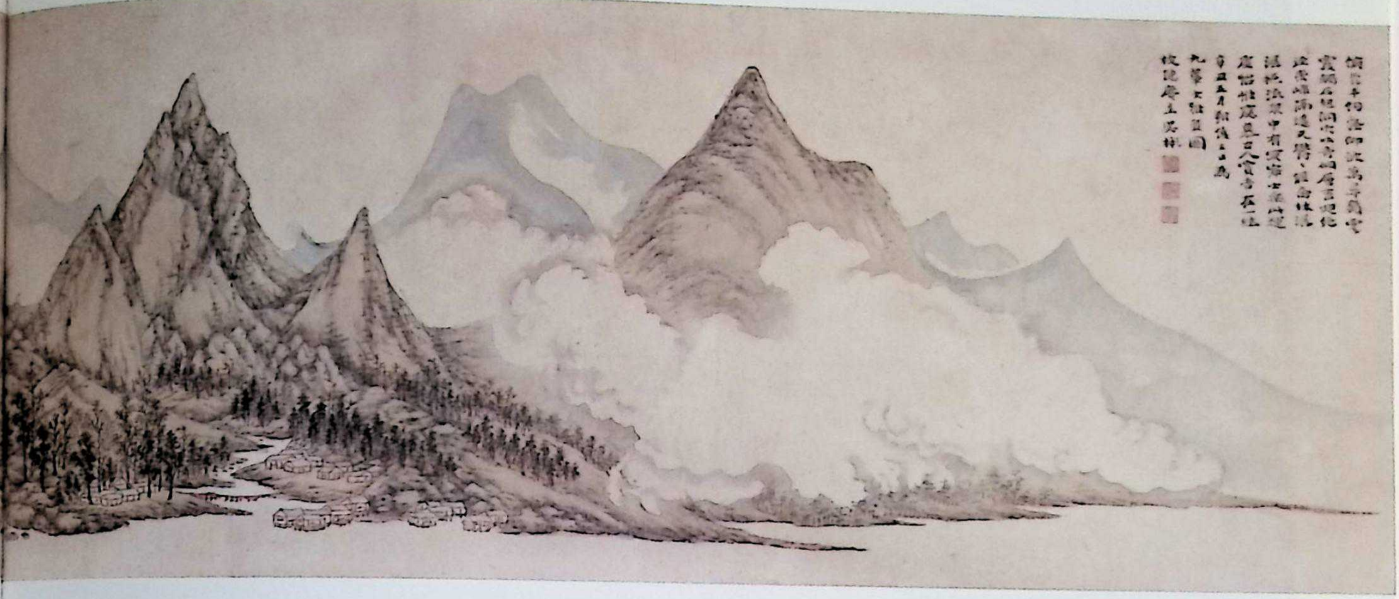
Ding Yunpeng (1547-1628) is known for his figure paintings and Buddhist images. This scroll, in fine brushwork, portrays five manifestations of Guanyin mainly in red and white colors, plus gold. It looks very elegant. On the top right corner is a postscript by his contemporary Dong Qichang. Plus the high standard of this piece in its own right, it is supposed to be an authentic painting by Ding. Dong's postscript says, the painter was "over 30 years old" at that time, so it is inferred that this scroll was created in 1579 or 1580. It was initially in the collections of the Qing palace, later bestowed by Puyi to someone and ended up overseas. It was purchased by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art from C.T. Loo in 1950.



Landscape
Ming Dynasty
1601
Wu Bin
Ink and Color on Paper
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

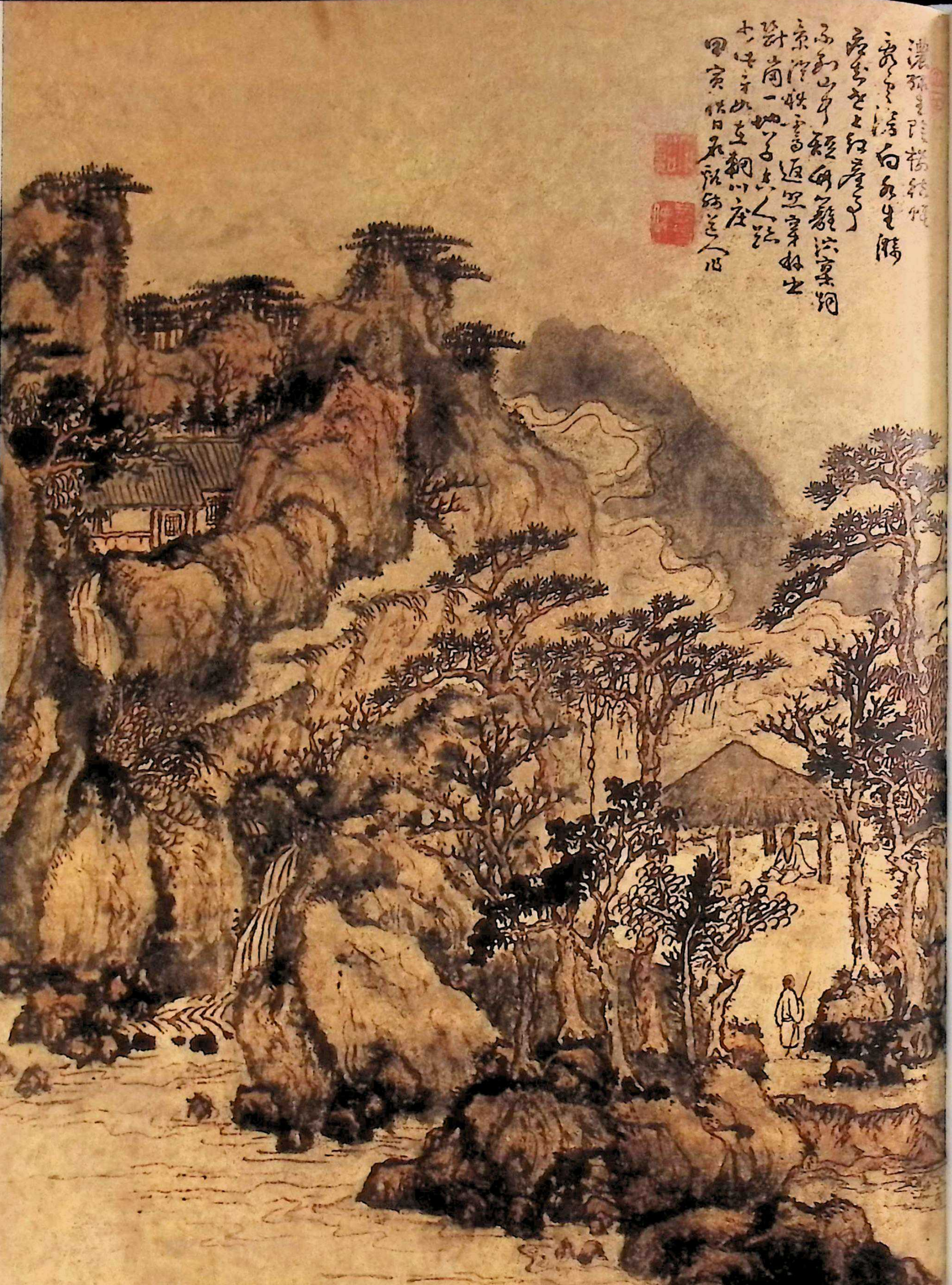
Wu Bin (1550-1643) is historically known for his Buddhist images and figure paintings, but his landscape paintings were also valued by his contemporaries. The extant paintings by Wu Bin present a strange style characterized by deformed figures and landscape. Such a style was not recognized by the literati painting system, nor paid due attention in painting history written by literati. For this reason, there is little literature on Wu Bin and his painting career.

At the beginning of the scroll are a poem and inscriptions by the painter himself, so it is known that this scroll was created "three days after the first day of lunar May in the xin-chou year", i.e., 1601 given the period during which Wu lived. This scroll is supposed to be created in his early years. Landscape paintings by Wu now in existence were mostly created in his later years. This scroll reflects the style of his early landscape paintings. It portrays rolling, towering mountains alongside the river. At the beginning, an open, calm river is accompanied by a range of distant



mountains shrouded by clouds, with only the peaks high above and woods at foothills in sight. In the middle, clouds disperse and disappear from a closer point of sight, revealing dense woods, huts, pavilions, waterfalls, and creeks in the mountains. Close to the end of the scroll, the landscape becomes foggy again, with farther point of sight, returning to a calm state. The entire scroll emits an ethereal air. The strange mountains show traces of the painter's queer landscape paintings in his later years. Nevertheless, the style is still conventional: dense brushwork, fragmented rocks that retain a sense of wholeness, and simple colors. The poem as preface supplements and explains the conception: "looking down there are deep precipices, while looking up, there are towering peaks. The clouds are rising with rocks, and caves spitting out strange fogs. Layers of mountains hide secluded trails, while lofty peaks block the distant sky..."

This scroll was initially held by Wang Jiqian who sold it to the Honolulu Museum of Art in 1972.



Landscape

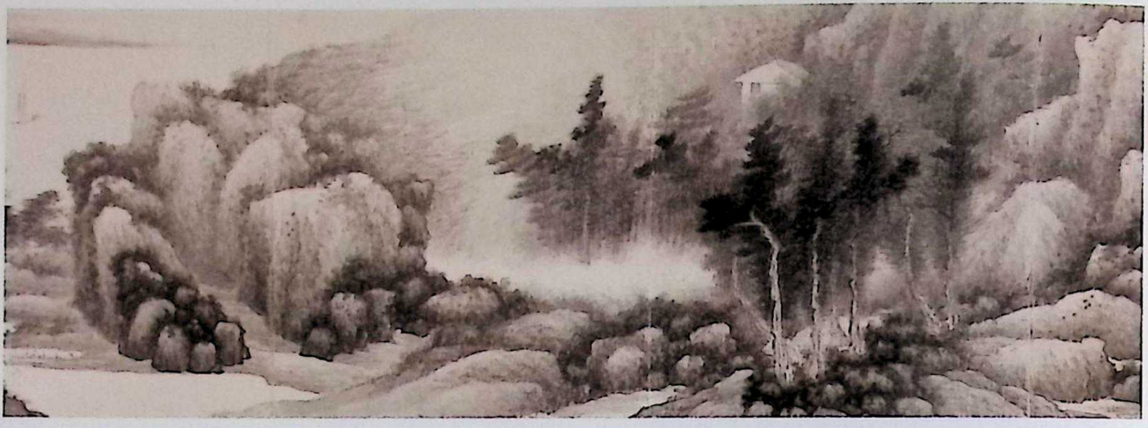
Qing Dynasty
1674
Kun Can (inscribed)
Ink on Paper
Slight Color
86.5 × 54.5 cm
Collected in the Harvard Art Museums

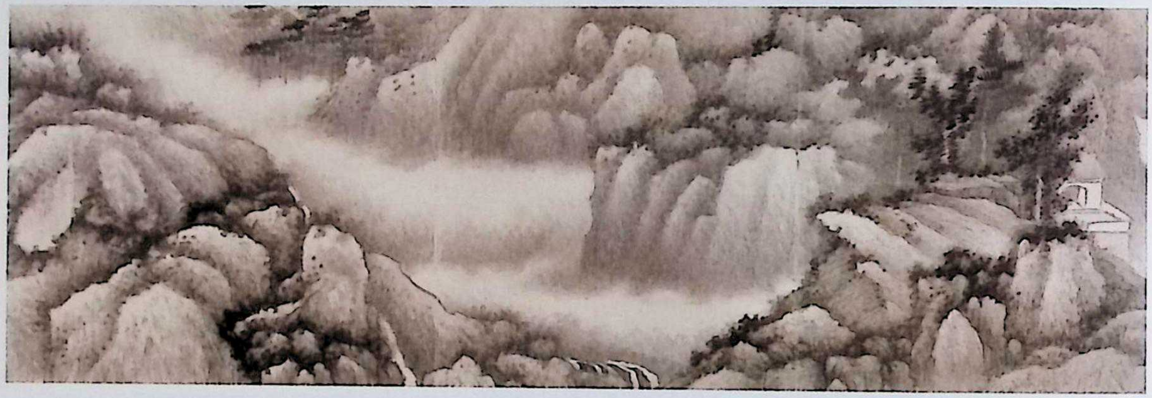
This painting, with a simple composition and a moderate size, roughly falls into the category of landscape sketches. The pavilions and towers, waterfalls and creeks, old trees and clouds, and hermit in a pavilion, among other elements, portrayed in this sketch were customarily depicted by literati painters in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The portrayal of rocks vaguely shows traces of some painters of the Yuan Dynasty including Wang Meng.

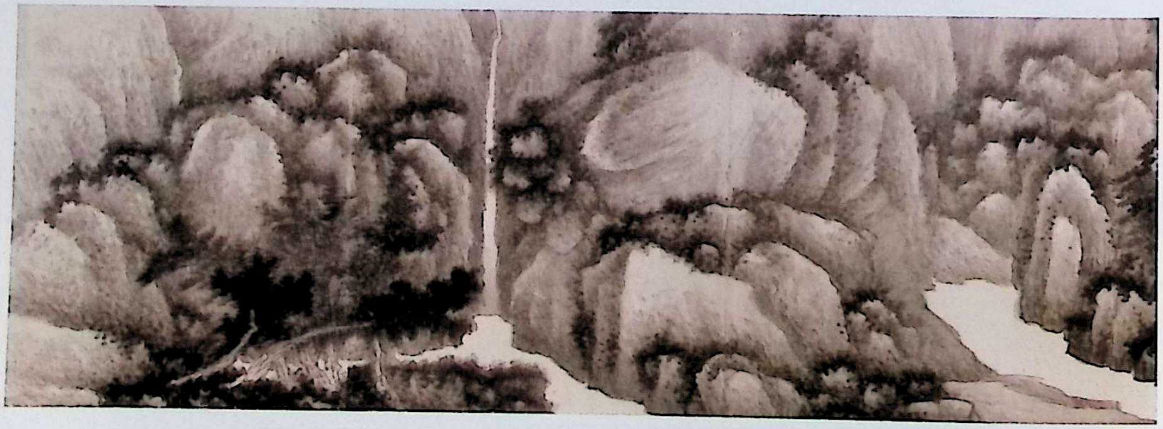
The "Wangchuan Manor" at the end of the poem inscribed on the top right corner seems to suggest that what the author is trying to present has something to do with the *Wangchuan Villa* of Wang Wei. The painting in its own right does contain an overtone of living in mountains and in recluse. This painting is inscribed with "By Shixi Monk Can on a hot summer day in the jia-yin year", suggesting that it is assumed to be created by Kun Can in the summer of 1674. However, as it is uncertain when he was born or died (today scholars are prone to assume that he died in 1673), and as he pursued various styles of painting, there is no consensus reached on if this painting was really created by Kun Can.

Kun Can is one of the Four Monk Masters in the early Qing Dynasty. Although he played an important role in Chinese painting history, many basic facts about him, including his biography and early education on painting he received, remain unclear. His contemporaries commented that his paintings resembled that of Huang Gongwang, but seen from his extant paintings, they are by no means homogeneous. In addition, paintings created in his twilight years show obvious evidences of retrogression, which adds one more obstacle to research on his paintings.

This painting was acquired by the Fogg Art Museum in 1923. It is also worth noting that this piece was originally a hanging scroll, but is now mounted on a paperboard with a wooden frame. Such a switch of form is arguably an exception in traditional Chinese paintings. As to when the current mounting happened, more detailed textual research is needed.







Landscape Album

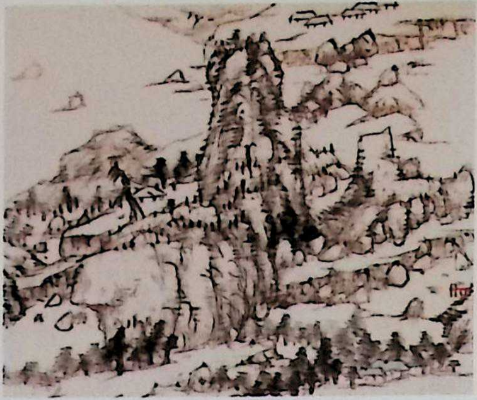
Qing Dynasty
Gong Xian
Ink on Paper
26.6 × 971.6 cm
Collected in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

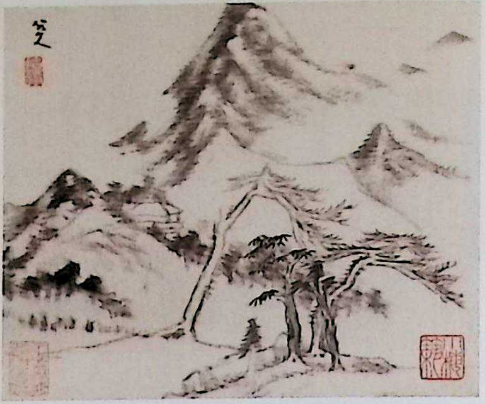
Landscape paintings by men of letters are mostly reflections of the ideal natural views they've imaged, instead of portrayals of real-life landscape. Given this fact, the portrayal of the painter's "state of mind" is a fitting description of Gong Xian's paintings. Gong himself often said in his inscriptions that his paintings imitated after an ancient master, though his unique style is more easily identifiable. Gong once, in his notes on painting, showed his interest in "strangeness", which does seem obvious in his paintings. Gong Xian (1618-1689) and his paintings are one of the most unconventional representatives in ancient Chinese painting history.

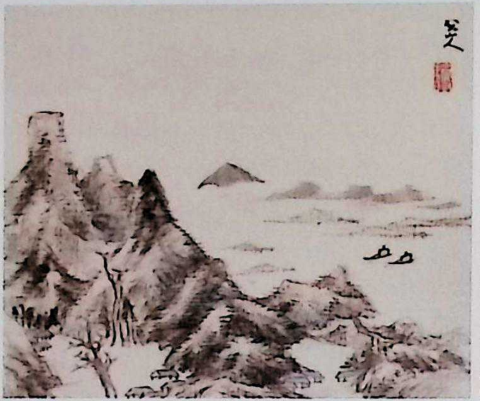
This long-form landscape scroll shows Gong's representative style. Paintings created by Gong at a mature stage often have a full composition filled with various elements, such as rocks, trees, and buildings. This scroll is no exception. The rocks and woods are textured and shaded with dark, moist ink, while mountain trails, waters, and clouds are depicted with white spaces. These negative spaces allow the full composition to breathe. Also, their combination with ink dark and light creates a distinct dreamy, hazy effect typical of Gong Xian's style.

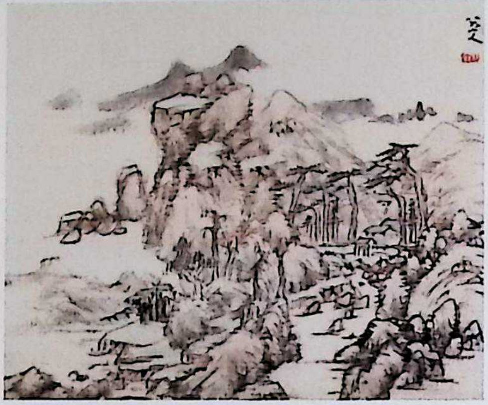
Gong's paintings are characterized by strange rocks, slight contrast in light and shadow and its resulting three-dimensional effects. In light of this, some scholars argue that perhaps Western visual art introduced by missionaries during that period influenced his paintings. Some scholars, delving into his later hard-lived life, hold the view that his painting style reflects his disturbed state of mind in political unrest. Relevant literature reveals that Gong was politically passionate in his early years, and after the Ming Dynasty fell apart, he became a self-styled adherent of the former dynasty.

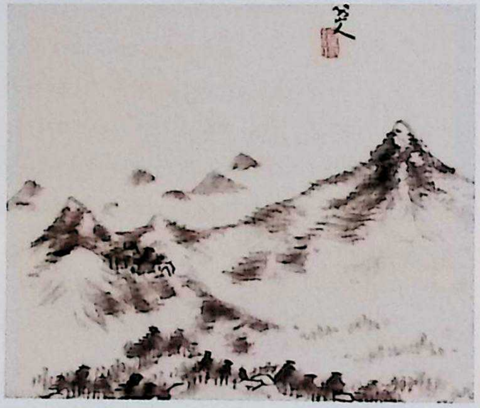
This scroll is presumed to be created in the early 1670s and is a representative piece of work by Gong Xian at his mature stage.

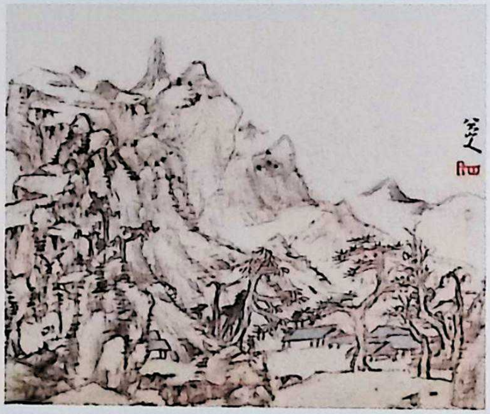


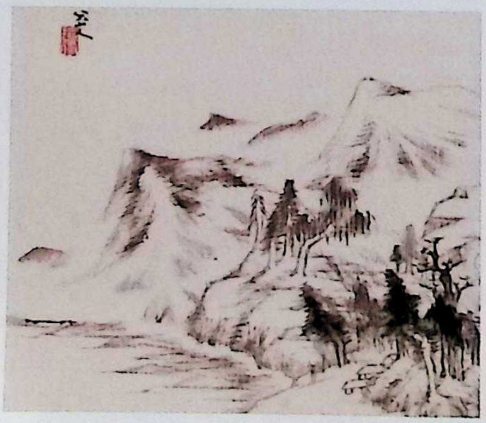


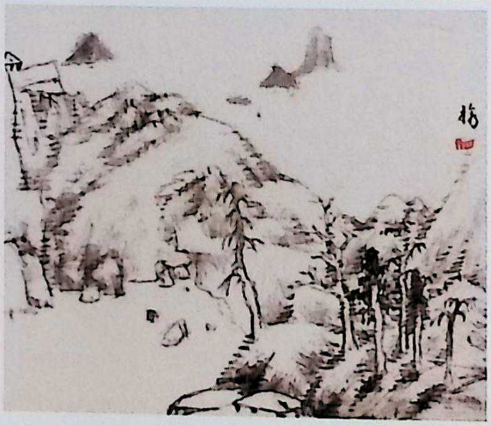












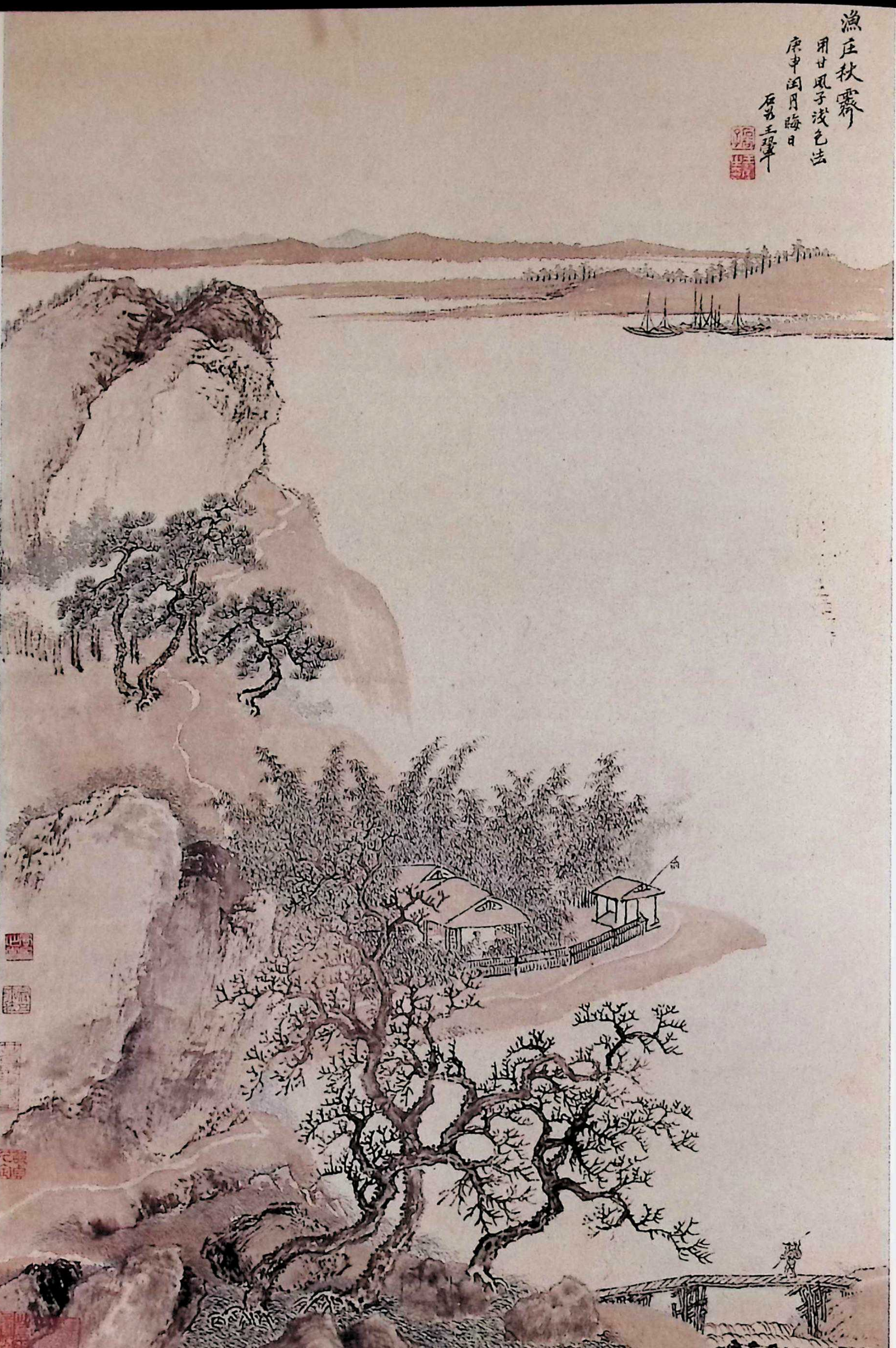
Album of Eight Landscapes

Qing Dynasty
Zhu Da
Ink and Color on Paper
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

Zhu Da (1626-ca. 1705), an important painter in the late Ming and the early Qing Dynasty, is more widely known as "Bada Shanren", one of his courtesy names. Zhu was a member of the Ming Dynasty royal clan, and the ninth generation grandson of Zhu Quan, Prince of Ning, who is the 16th son of Zhu Yuangzhang, the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty. After the demise of the Ming Dynasty, he became a Buddhist monk and led a wandering life. Zhu Da is historically known for his flower-and-bird paintings. His simple, weird style and condensed brushwork are presumed to inherit the techniques of Chen Chun and Xu Wei. And, built on this, he elevated big-sized freehand flower-and-bird painting to a new height. Also, in the eyes of his contemporaries, Zhu was a flower-and-bird painter. However, Zhu's landscape paintings are no less appealing but easily ignored as Zhu's reputation as an excellent flower-and-bird painter was too overshadowing, and he only started to create landscape paintings roughly in the 19th year under the reign of Emperor Kangxi (1680).

From this album by Zhu Da, we can get an idea of what his landscape paintings look like. This album portrays views of barren mountains, old trees, uninhabited places which appear desolate, chilly, solitary, and vast, in line with the cool and strange touch of his flower-and-bird paintings. Deeply influenced by painting theories put forward by Dong Qichang, Zhu learned from Dong and other literati painters Dong held in high esteem, including Mi Fu, Huang Gongwang, and Ni Zan. The portrayal of mountain peaks in this album is a variant of landscape paintings by the Mi family, while that of rocks and withered trees has traces of Ni Zan's folded belt texture strokes. Though without the year of creation inscribed, seen from the look of the first character of "Bada Shanren", this album is supposed to be a piece by Zhu in twilight years when he was aged between 70 and 80.

This album was initially in the hands of Wang Jiqian, and later purchased by Robert Allerton, a patron of the Honolulu Museum of Art, who donated it to the museum in 1959.


漁庄秋霽
用甘風子淺色法
庚申閏月晦日
石谷王翬

Clearing Autumn Sky over a Fishing Village

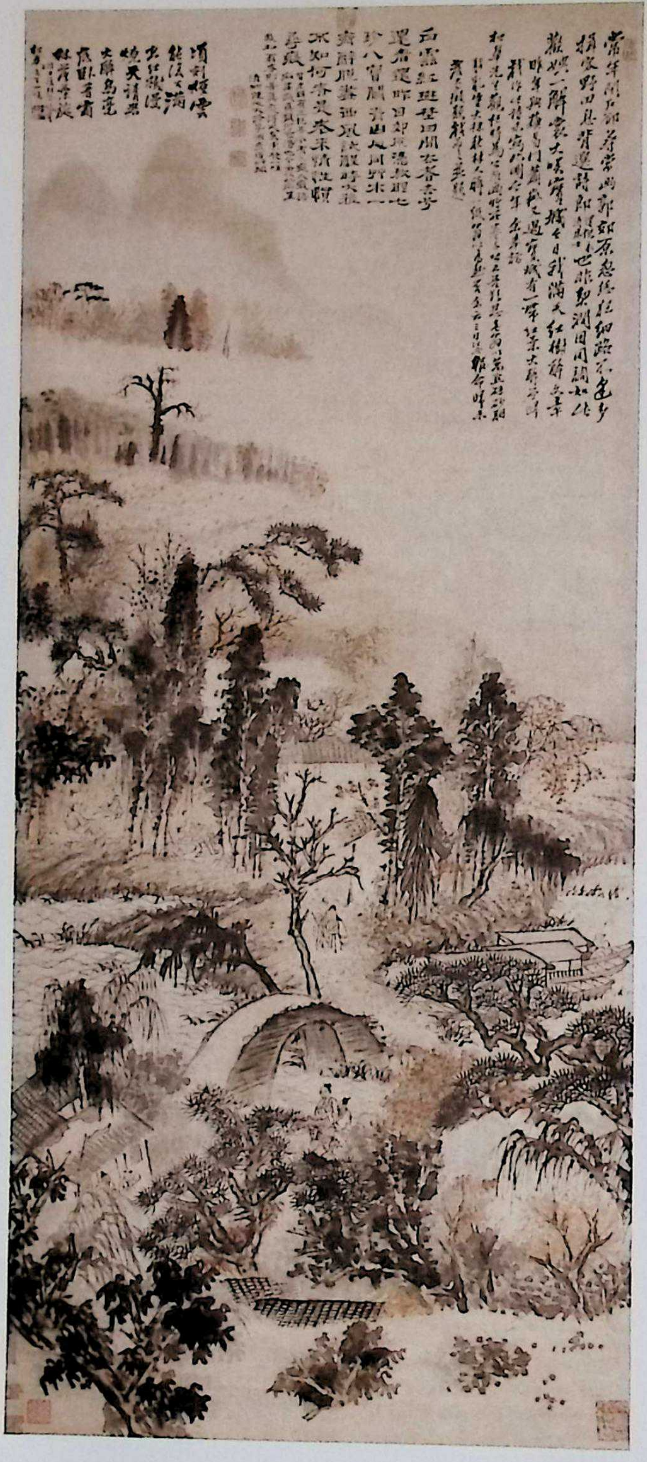
Qing Dynasty
1680
Wang Hui
Ink and Color on Paper
161.9 × 51.4 cm
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

Wang Hui (1632-1717), an orthodox landscape painter of the early Qing Dynasty, is one of the "Four Wangs" together with Wang Shimin, Wang Jian, and Wang Yuanqi. The "Four Wangs", close by friendship, teacher-student relationship or kinship, were directly or indirectly influenced by Dong Qichang in painting ideas and practices. They advocated for modeling after ancient styles and learned from preceding literati painters in terms of layout, brushwork, and coloring, among other aspects. Seen from relevant literature and extant works, their paintings are mostly titled "after XX" or "a copy of XX".

Ni Zan, one of the Four Masters of the Yuan Dynasty, also created a painting titled "Clearing Autumn Sky over a Fishing Village". However, this piece by Wang Hui only borrowed the motif, and both the scene portrayed and brushwork have little relevance to it. This scroll depicts a towering mountain, at the foothills of which a peasant is crossing over a wooden bridge. Across the bridge are three gnarled old trees. Midway up the mountain, a trail clearly visible is leading up to the top. Behind the huge rock in the middle is a small thatched cottage half hidden in a bamboo grove. A scholar is looking into the distance from a pavilion. The distant view are a range of hills and dots of fishing boats which highlight the vast river, cleverly creating a flat, distant effect for this hanging scroll.

According to the "on the last day in the leap month of the geng-shen year" inscribed by the painter, this scroll is supposed to be created in 1680 when Wang was in his middle age. The painter claimed that he "followed the light color approach of Gan Fengzi", in order to show that his paintings are well-rooted, but in fact, he established his own style. A look at paintings modeled or copied after ancient ones by the "Four Wangs" in this light can reveal that they did not blindly imitate past painters and pursue extreme likeness as career painters did. Instead, they created and established their own styles of painting.

This scroll was acquired by the Honolulu Museum of Art in 1955.



Drunk in Autumn Woods

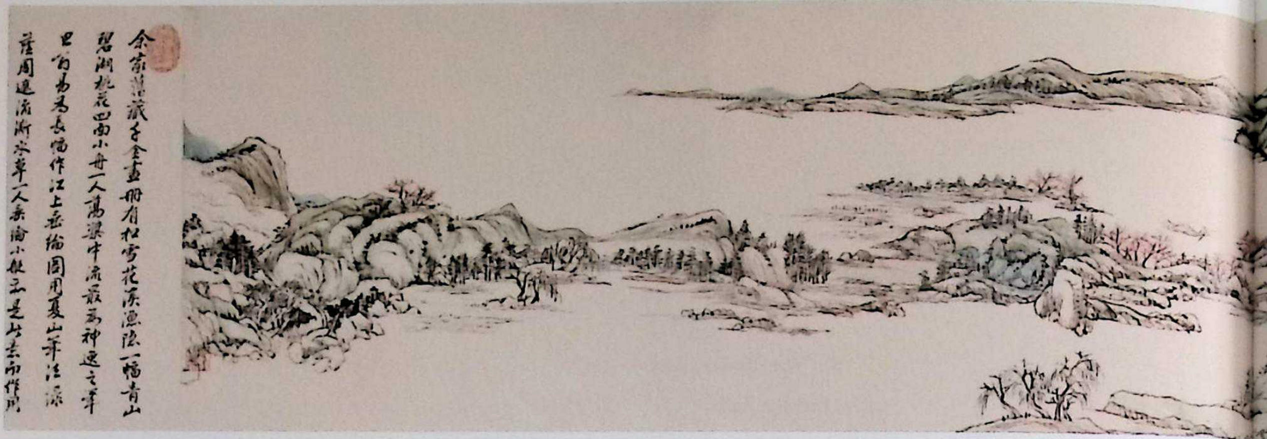
Qing Dynasty
Shi Tao
Ink and Color on Paper
161 × 70.5 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan
Museum of Art

Shi Tao (1642-1708), formerly named Zhu Ruoji, was a member of the Ming Dynasty royal family. After the demise of the Ming Dynasty, he traveled to many places as a monk and pursued a career as a painter for the rest of his life. Shi Tao was good at landscape, flower, and figure paintings, and wrote the *Treatise on the Philosophy of Painting*, a book on painting theories.

Shi's landscape paintings are diverse as he drew upon many schools and styles, and in his late years developed his own original style. The bottom half of this *Drunk in Autumn Woods* is densely portrayed, with trees, rocks, houses, a bridge, a creek, and human figures layered and overlapped, forming a quite peculiar composition. The top half portrays distant mountains disappearing into clouds, with the blank space inscribed with three paragraphs of poem, all written by Shi Tao himself, to supplement the scene and document the painting process. The inscriptions indicate that the poem was written to record an autumn trip with friends to admire red maples. This scroll was created at the request of friends. The poem highlights "autumn" and "drunkenness", while dots of red maple leaves in the painting emphasize the season.

Although the composition is dense, the painter cleverly used negative spaces that intersperse across the landscape, which serve to present the ethereal water flows and rising clouds in the autumn without making the frame over-filled. The brushwork is unconstrained, with dense mossy dots, and light or dark shades of ink in harmony. Based on the brushwork, the year of creation, not inscribed, is supposed to be at a mature stage in Shi's late years.

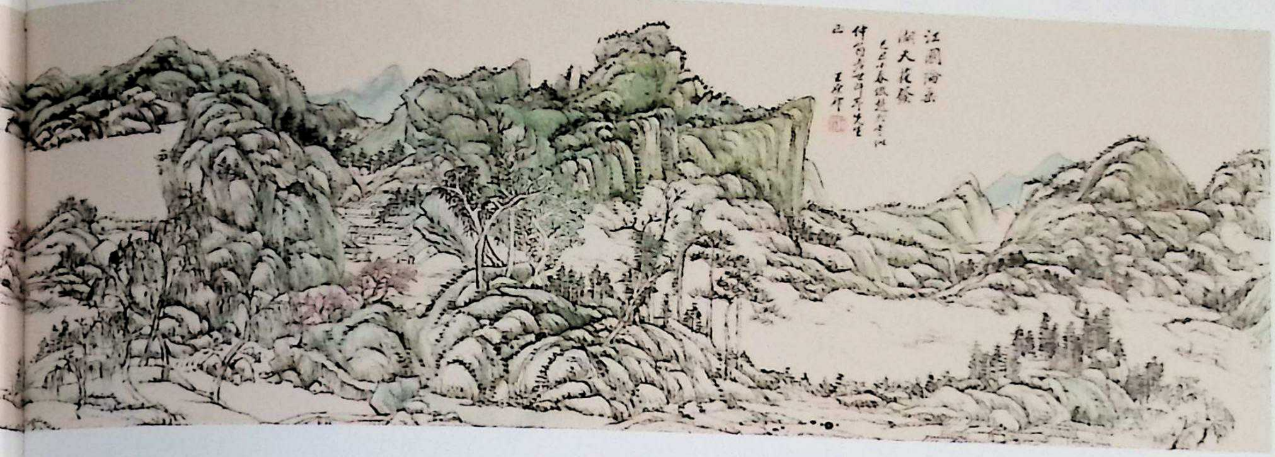
This scroll is affixed with the "Borrowed Piece Viewed by Gao Fenggang", the stamp of Gao Xiang, a painter of the mid-Qing Dynasty, and several stamps for collection of Zhang Daqian, a huge fan of Shi Tao. The stamp "One of a hundred Paintings by Shi Tao Consecrated by Daqian Jushi" shows his passion for collecting Shi's paintings. Later, John M. Crawford, Jr., a U.S. collector, acquired this scroll he valued very much from Zhang, and donated it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1987.



Fishing in River Country at Blossom Time
Qing Dynasty
1709
Wang Yuanqi
Ink and Color on Paper
26 × 146.1 cm
Collected in the
Metropolitan Museum of Art

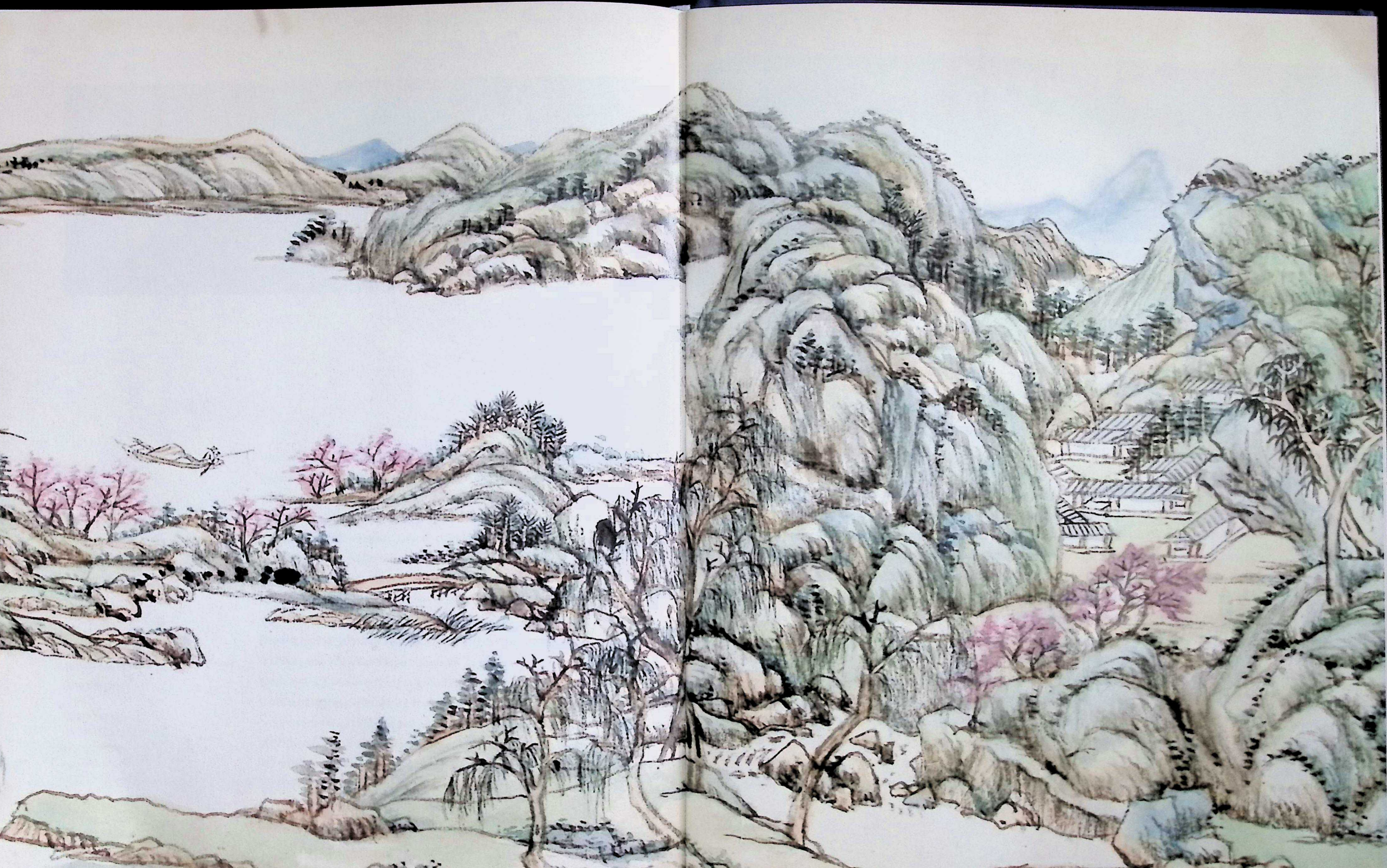
The inscriptions by the painter on this scroll suggest that it was created in the autumn of 1709. In a season of withered lives, what the painter drew is a spring scene. The first half of this scroll portrays rolling mountains where pervasive clouds hide the trails, blocking out connections with the outside. Several cottages are half hidden in the secluded valley. This is undoubtedly an ideal place for reclusive living where no outsider would disturb the seclusion of a hermit. In contrast, the second half portrays an open river in the middle of which a stretch of protruded shoals divides the river into two. A fisherman is boating alone on the river. The flowers and trees on the banks make clear the season again and echo the description of "Fishing in River Country at Blossom Time" written by the painter. The verdant mountains, clear waters, and peach blossoms here and there are obviously spring landscape in south China.

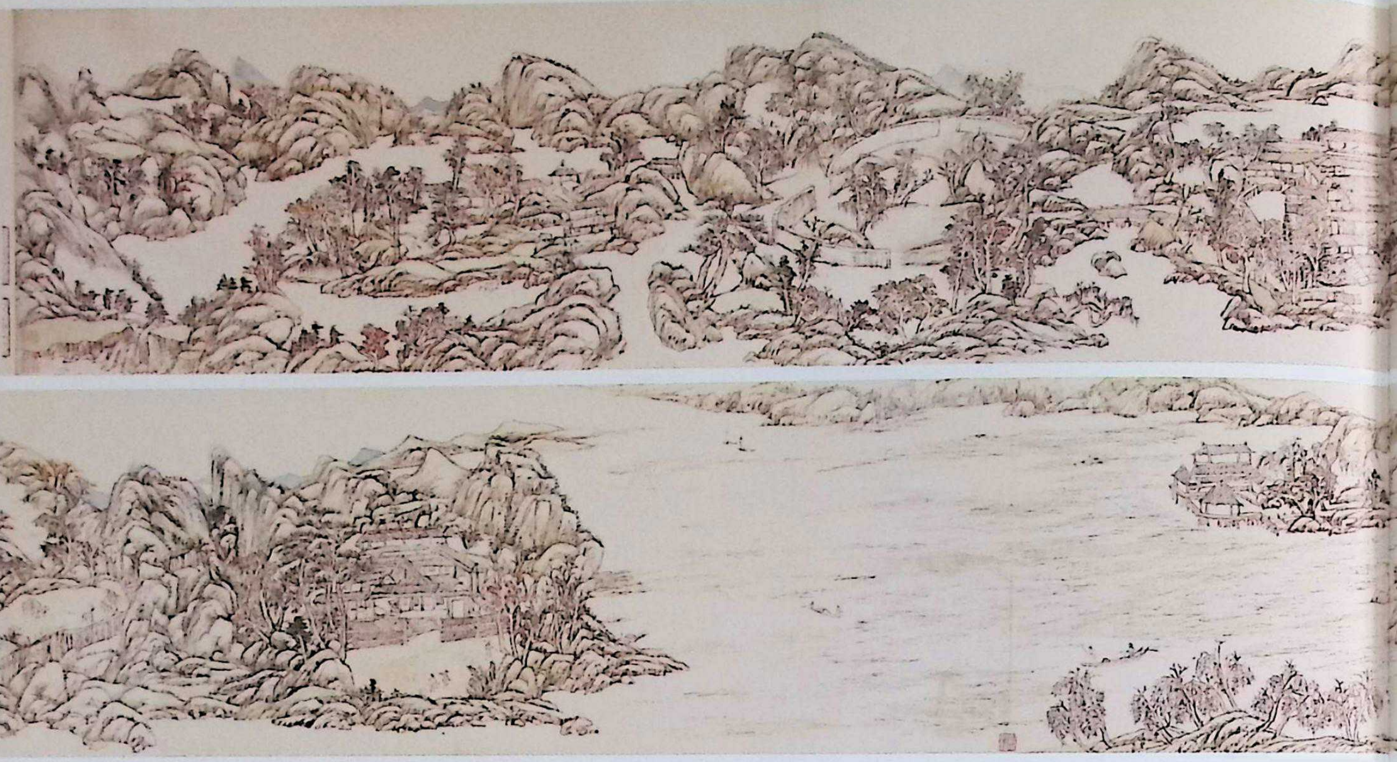
Wang Yuanqi (1642-1715) made clear that this scroll was modeled after Zhao Mengfu, and, as if not enough, especially indicated in the inscriptions at the end of scroll the ins and outs of this scroll: "Among the old collection of invaluable paintings in my house, there is the *A Recluse*



Fishing in a Flowering River by Songxue (Zhao Mengfu) which portrays a man fishing on a small boat in the middle of a clear river surrounded by green mountains and blossoming peach trees, with a rare mystic touch. Siweng (Dong Qichang) created a long scroll based on the piece by Songxue, and named it "Fishing in River Country". This new version, using the brushwork of the *Summer Mountains*, portrays a man fishing on a small boat in a green river. Both paintings are about the same motif but serve different purposes." Accordingly we know that there are two sources of inspiration: one is the *A Recluse Fishing in a Flowering River* by Zhao Mengfu, and the other is a copy recreated by Dong Qichang based on Zhao's version. This scroll by Wang is undoubtedly a reinterpretation on Zhao and Dong's works. By echoing a motif painted by these two predecessors, Wang included himself in the rank of literati painters and emphasized his identity as an orthodox literati painter.

This scroll was once held by Jean Pierre Dubosc, a French collector, before it was acquired by John M. Crawford. It was donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art after Crawford died in 1988.



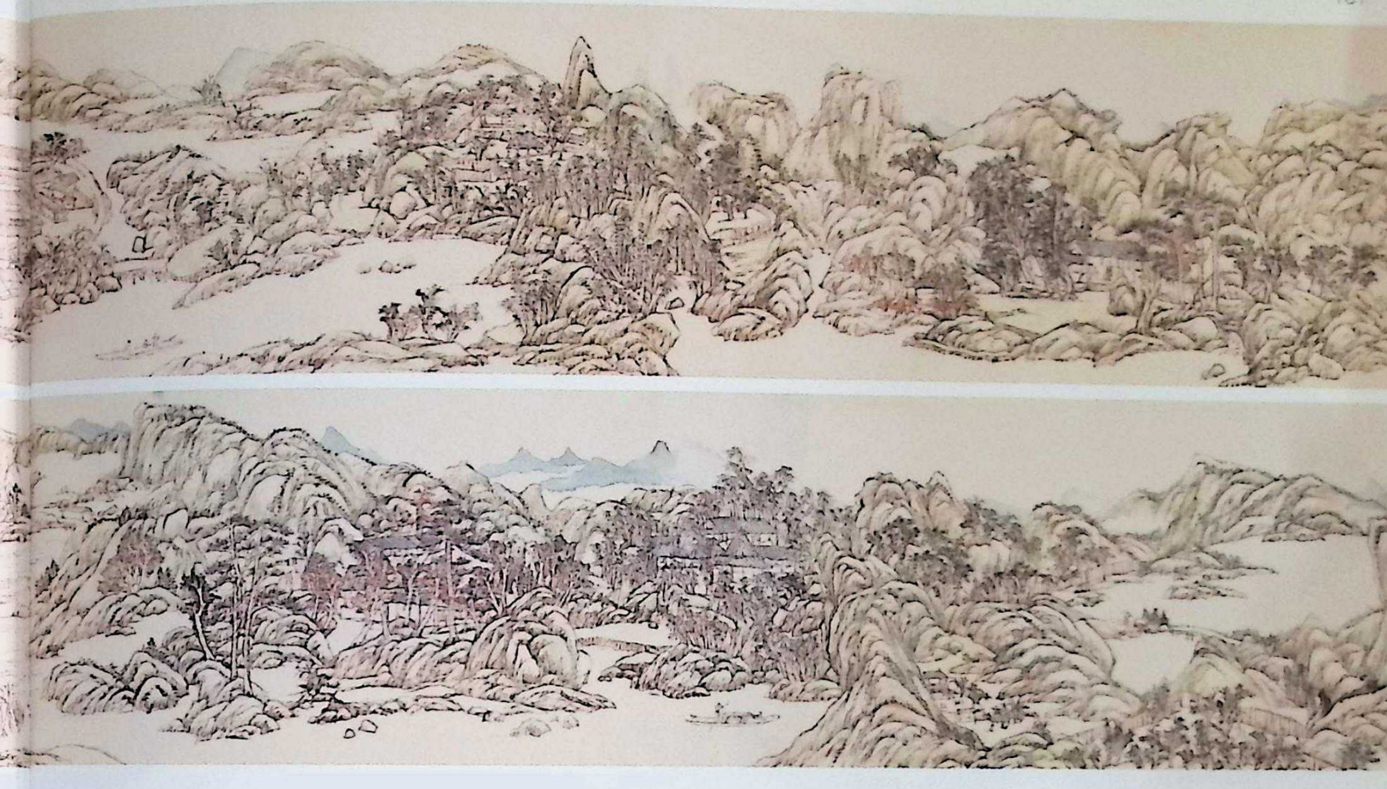


Wangchuan Villa
Qing Dynasty
1711
Wang Yuanqi
Ink and Color on Paper
35.7 × 545.1 cm
Collected in the Metropolitan
Museum of Art

Wang Wei is revered as the father of literati painting. Though few of his paintings survived, his ideas on and practices in painting were revived in the imagination and construction of a constant flow of literati painters from the Song Dynasty to the Ming dynasty. This piece of *Wangchuan* is a case in point. According to historical records, the villa, Wang's secluded residence, was located in today's Lantian County, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. Legends have it that Wang drew the *Wangchuan* on a wall in the Qingyuan Temple.

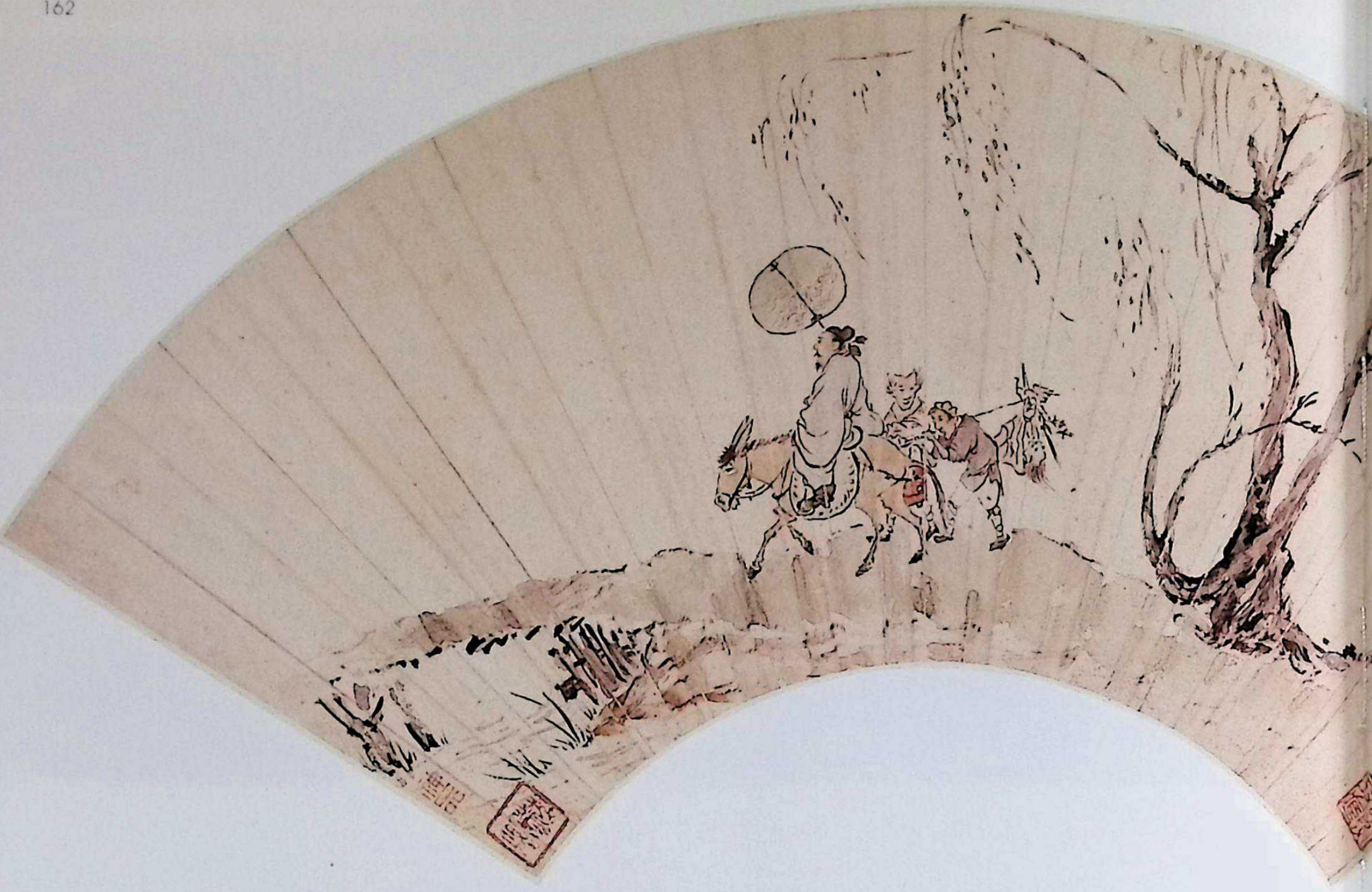
We have no clue about what Wang's painting *Wangchuan* was like. Nevertheless, by the Northern Song Dynasty or an earlier period, it has become a classical motif. Guo Ruoxu claimed that he saw in person the "Wangchuan by Wang Mojie" pattern discovered in the Imperial Storehouse of the Southern Tang Dynasty. According to literature, Guo Zhongshu painted the *Wangchuan after Mojie*. It has been a popular motif of painting ever since.

As an orthodox landscape painter of the early Qing Dynasty, Wang



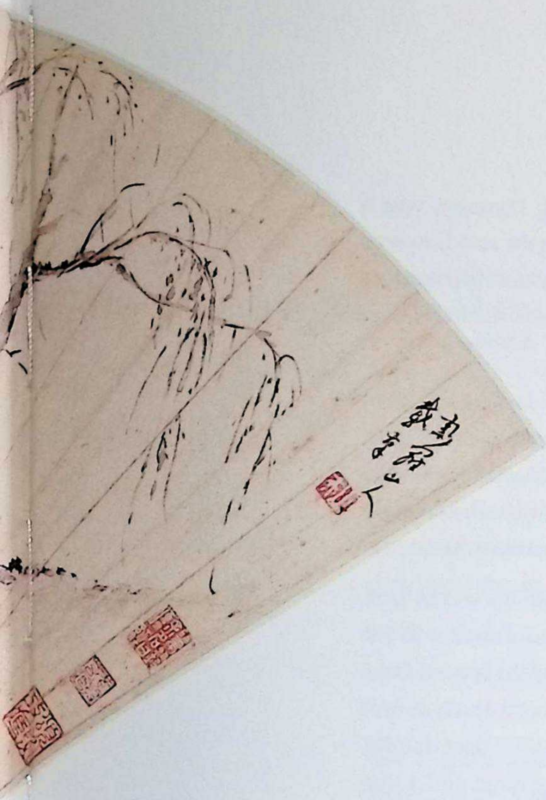
Yuanqi was deeply influenced by the painting theories of Dong Qichang, and practiced literati painting. This *Wangchuan Villa*, created over nine months when Wang Yuanqi (1642-1715) was at age 69, pays his homage to the tradition of literati painting and Wang Wei, the great poet-painter. This scroll begins with the citation of 20 poems on the *Wangchuan Villa* by Wang Wei. Applying the techniques Wang Yuanqi was good at, this scroll includes the scenes portrayed in these poems. The ending postscript, in addition to explaining why he painted this scroll, expresses his personal views on the evolution of literati painting. As if to highlight the antiquity of the theme, Wang did not use ink and wash techniques that focus on the brush and ink play, as he usually did. Instead, he directly applied stone blue and magma red colors to outlining and texturing. For this, he explained in the postscript: "The colors are intended to make up for and set off the brushwork."

This scroll is arguably the crowning masterpiece of Wang Yuanqi in his late years. There are postscripts by Huang Yi, Zhu Yifan, and Wu hufan, among others, and inscriptions by famous viewers including Xu Bangda, Zhang Daqian, Wang Yachen, Huang Junbi, and Ling Shuhua. Based on these information, we can roughly piece together the changes of hands of this scroll until it was held by Wang Jiqian. This scroll was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1977.



Zhong Kui and Demons
Qing Dynasty
Hua Yan
Ink and Color on Paper
Collected in the Honolulu Museum of Art

According to literature, folding fan was brought to China by a Korean envoy as a tribute during the Yongle years. Zhu Di, Emperor Chengzu, appreciated it and ordered craftsmen to copy it. Since then, folding fan gradually became popular in a top-down manner, and widely embraced by the nobility and literati. Many famous scholars also painted on the fan. As fans are more visible than other forms of painting including hanging scroll, horizontal scroll, and album, such fans painted by famous scholars could show one's social status on various occasions. It was



also much sought-after by artsy-fartsy people. Therefore, folding fan emerged as an important form of painting in the Ming and Qing dynasties.

As indicated by the inscriptions "Written playfully by Xinluo Shanren" on the right side, this fan painting was created by Hua Yan (1682-1756), a painter from Yangzhou in the mid-Qing Dynasty. What it portrays is, under a willow with sparse foliage along a river, one man on a donkey, together with two attendants, one holding a fan and the other carrying something, is going to cross a bridge. The man on the donkey dresses like a scholar. However, a closer look at him would reveal that he wears an official hat and black boots. While, the two attendants do not look like human. Plus, the thing one attendant carries is a little demon they've caught. Thus, what the painter portrayed is supposed to be Zhong Kui, a demon hunter in Chinese mythology, only with a different look, rather than the fierce-looking appearance we're used to seeing. According to folk tales, Zhong Kui can ward off evil spirits. The tradition of painting Zhong Kui took shape very early. About in the mid-Ming Dynasty, the painting circle started a craze to secularize the image of Zhong Kui with a scholarly appearance, so as to cater to the taste of literati. The image of the demon hunter as portrayed on this fan covering by Hua Yan originated from this tradition.

Contributor to this book: Qin Xiaolei, Central Academy of Fine Arts

Postscript

Weng Tonghe (1830-1904), an important politician in the late Qing Dynasty, was a leader of the upright political group who was tutor to Emperor Tongzhi and Emperor Guangxu, held pivotal positions such as Grand Councilor of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and presided over the imperial civil service examinations for more than four decades.

His great-great-grandson Wan-go H.C. Weng (1918-2020) is also a legendary figure. Wan-go H.C. Weng, born in a learned family, is an expert in history and archaeology and an adept connoisseur of paintings and calligraphy. Mr. Weng has been a long-time advocate for people-to-people cultural exchange between the U.S. and China, and once worked with the world's top auction houses to find an audience in international art markets.

I've long known that Mr. Weng is a good hand at cinematography, with his works once widely acclaimed internationally, but it is at the end of 2012 that I had a chance to see his treasure trove of photos when I visited his residence in Lyme, which he named Laixi Residence (named after a creek in Lyme). He walked us through several study rooms and joked that he had a few "war rooms" dedicated to studies on the Weng family, Chinese culture, and Western culture respectively, as well as a painting room and a film studio...

In the process, I suddenly spotted a set of sturdy bookcases. I asked him what were in it. Mr. Weng said, "These are precious negatives. My wife and I took these photos in major collection institutions across the world several decades ago. There are thousands of them, all about significant Chinese antiques." I was very excited at this finding. For so long, I've wished that a cherry-picked collection of Chinese cultural relics and artworks in museums overseas can be published in China's mainland. If done, it would be a rare integration of historical literature and data, and a special guide for readers to fully understand and appreciate these Chinese treasures collected in museums abroad.

Mr. Weng approved of my proposal, but he was then very busy working on things at hand. So we promised to work together on the editing and publishing of this project in five years.

In 2015, when Mr. Weng was 97, we met again as promised at his residence in Lyme, New Hampshire in northeastern U.S. He handed over more than one thousand representative photos he cherry-picked to us in earnest. Then we flew back to Beijing with this portfolio.

Wan-go H.C. Weng and his wife Cheng Huabao (Credit: Guy Weill, Weng's friend, 1978)

Mr. Weng has done a lot of amazing or surprising things. For example, the "Weng Collection" were brought back home and collected in the Shanghai Library in 2000. This donation made a big splash among the literary, museum and collection communities, even drew the attention of then head of state.

In 2016, the Chinese version of the *Essential Cultural Relics of China in Museums Overseas,* in three volumes, was published by Zhonghua Book Company, receiving positive reviews.

The English translation of the *Essential Cultural Relics of China in Museums Overseas* series, published by China Intercontinental Press, includes 373 pieces (or sets) of Chinese cultural relics collected in museums overseas photographed by Mr. Wan-go H.C. Weng, covering eight categories, i.e., paintings and calligraphy, extant Dunhuang paintings, murals, bronze ware, ceramics, jade ware, gold and silver ware, and Buddhist statues, which are grouped into five books by material and genre.

This series not only displays these gems of art, but also presents overall descriptions of these antiques, including the year they were collected, their value, and changes of hands. This series is intended to help more people across the globe appreciate the charm of Chinese "treasures lost overseas" and learn about the whereabouts of Chinese cultural relics overseas and their current homes.

Special thanks to Ms. Weng Yisi, Mr. Weng Yijun and Ms. Wang Yannan for their contributions to the publication of this series.

寇勤

Kou Qin

January 2021

Appendix: A Brief Chronology of Chinese History

Era of Five Virtuous "Emperors"	ca. 3000 BC-ca. 2100 BC
Xia Dynasty	ca. 2070-1600 BC
Shang Dynasty	1600-1046 BC
Western Zhou Dynasty	1046-771 BC
Eastern Zhou Dynasty	770-256 BC
Spring and Autumn Period	770-476 BC
Warring States Period	475-221 BC
Qin Dynasty	221-206 BC
Western Han Dynasty	206 BC-AD 25
Eastern Han Dynasty	25-220
Three Kingdoms Period	220-280
Western Jin Dynasty	265-317
Eastern Jin Dynasty	317-420
Northern and Southern Dynasties	420-589
Sui Dynasty	581-618

Tang Dynasty	618-907
Five Dynasties and Ten States	
Five Dynasties	907-960
Ten States	902-979
Northern Song Dynasty	960-1127
Southern Song Dynasty	1127-1279
Liao (or Khitan)	907-1125
Xixia (or Tangut)	1038-1227
Kin	1115-1234
Yuan Dynasty	1206-1368
Ming Dynasty	1368-1644
Qing Dynasty	1616-1911
The Republic of China	1912-1949
The People's Republic of China	Founded in 1949

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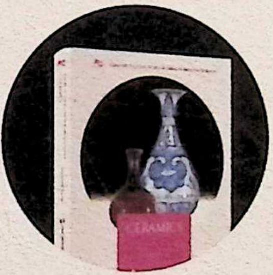

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